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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

AN ANALYSIS OF THE CAUSES OF HIGH SCHOOL
DROP-OUTS IN SOUTHERN ALBERTA
FROM 1947 TO 1951

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED
TO THE COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF EDUCATION

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

BY
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TABER, ALBERTA
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SYNOPSIS

The investigator's primary aim in this study was to discover why pupils left school without obtaining a high school diploma. To secure the information the questionnaire and the interview methods were used.

It was found that there was no one reason given by high school drop-outs for leaving school. The reasons most frequently given by drop-outs were that they left to look for jobs, that they had poor teachers, and that the courses they had to take in school were unrelated to their vocational plans.

The investigator also discovered other factors which may be associated with dropping out. These were the education and occupation of the parents, the lack of interest by pupils, the inadequacy of vocational training and counseling, the limitations of school facilities, and the overcrowded condition of schools.

The secondary aim of the study was to compare the questionnaire method and the interview method in research of this kind. It was found that both methods were effective, the former because it was an extensive study of a large sample and the latter because it was an intensive study of a smaller sample of drop-outs. A high degree of correspondence was found between results obtained by the two methods.

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CHAPTER I

PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

In 1936 Alberta made a revision of its school curricula, introducing what has come to be called "progressive education." Traditional academic subjects were retained but many new courses of a semi-practical nature were added. The "activity" principle of teaching and learning was made an important feature of all courses. Among the benefits anticipated from these changes was an increased "holding" power, especially on the part of the senior high schools. It was expected that students would remain longer and progress further.

It is now apparent that these hopes have not been realized, at least not to the extent desired. In the first place, many schools still offer a highly academic program. Secondly, students continue to drop out in considerable numbers from all of the high school grades, and all too few remain to complete requirements for university matriculation or even for the high school diploma.

1. The Drop-out Problem

The drop-out problem is a serious one. Less than fifty per cent of the pupils entering Canadian junior high

schools, graduate with a high school diploma.¹ Teachers report that many of the drop-outs have average or above average ability and are not leaving school because they could not pass the courses if they worked. They must have other reasons for not completing the work they began and were capable of doing.

Pupils who leave school without having secured a high school diploma are commonly referred to as "drop-outs". The primary purpose of this study was to discover the reasons for their dropping out. To this end a number of factors were canvassed: pupil opinions, attitudes, and interests; vocational plans at the beginning and end of school careers; subjects liked and disliked; expressed reasons for leaving school; and the nationality and occupation of parents.

In addition to this the study includes a follow-up of the drop-outs in the world of work. It surveys the kinds of jobs in which they are employed, their salaries and the satisfaction they derive from their present occupations.

This study is further interested in the attitudes of drop-outs toward the vocational aid given them, and in their opinions of the adequacy or the inadequacy of the curriculum. It was felt that in such a study any shortcomings or faults in the courses, school facilities, teachers, and

¹The Canadian Research Committee on Practical Education, Your Child Leaves School, Toronto, 1950, p.16.

vocational training would be brought to light. This study therefore, examines the causes of drop-outs in Southern Alberta, and on this basis makes inferences and recommendations.

2. Review of Related Studies

Only two reports of the previous studies of drop-outs were available to the investigator. One of these, Dr. H. J. Dillon's "Why Students Leave School" is the record of an investigation of 1360 drop-outs in the United States. The other, the Canadian Research Committee on Practical Education's "Your Child Leaves School" is the report of a study which includes an analysis of drop-outs in Canada.

Dr. Dillon's work was done for the purpose of examining the problems of American educational systems. Dillon probed the weaknesses of the programs that caused so many people to discontinue school and recommended ways in which the programs could be modified in order to retain more pupils. The reasons given for leaving school showed that seventy-one percent either preferred working, disliked some teacher or course, thought they could learn more out of school, or did not want to repeat subjects.

Only 21 per cent left for economic reasons. Most of these withdrew without consulting anyone on the school staff. Dillon found that one third of the drop-outs held three or

more jobs in their first post-school year. Half of the drop-outs regretted leaving school.

His conclusions are summarized below:

- (1) A large percentage of the drop-outs have either poor scholarship, poor attendance, or a dislike for school.
- (2) Any one reason may be the cause of the other two. Poor scholarship may be caused by lack of ability on the part of the pupils, or by courses that do not make sense to them.
- (3) Although poor health may cause poor attendance it is not a major reason.
- (4) Seventy-one percent of those who quit had repeated courses. Dr. Dillon recommended that teachers should help pupils with poor attendance records rather than threaten them with expulsion, detention, or court action. The pupils should be given an experience of success and recognition to induce a liking for school.

The Canadian Research Committee on Practical Education carried out a study of 12,124 graduates and of 14,219 drop-outs from Canadian Schools during 1948. It was found that of every hundred pupils who start Primary School only twenty-two finish high school.

Approximately 134,000 pupils drop-out yearly from Canadian schools. Fifty-nine percent of the boys and fifty-one percent of the girls who start junior high school (Grade VII)

do not remain long enough to graduate with a Grade XI standing or junior matriculation. The Committee found that the drop-out rate varied among provinces and that it was greater in rural than in urban areas.

The reasons for dropping out were summarized according to sex. Each drop-out was requested to give three reasons why he left school. The three main reasons given by boys were:

- (1) Reasons related to the school, (given by 52%);
- (2) Economic reasons, (given by 30%);
- (3) Personal reasons, (given by 18%).

The three main reasons given by girls were:

- (1) Reasons related to the school, (given by 43%);
- (2) Economic reasons, (given by 30%);
- (3) Personal reasons, (given by 21%).

The reasons relating to the school included lack of interest, lack of ability, and unsuitability of the curriculum. Economic reasons included desire to earn money, inadequacy of family income, and need to help at home. Personal reasons included attitude of parents, opportunity for securing a good position, maladjustment, and illness.

The study shows that repetition of grades is a danger signal indicative of early dropping out. Among the drop-outs are about one-half of the pupils with average or superior learning capacity, capable of graduating from high

school. About eighty-five percent of the ones of below average learning capacity drop out.

Smaller schools offer only academic courses. Larger centres offer more practical courses such as shop work, home economics, and commercial training. The report states that more pupils drop out of vocational than out of academic courses because after a year or two in high school these pupils must leave to earn a living.

The Committee's conclusions are summarized below.

- (1) About sixty percent of the pupils in smaller centres drop out rather than take the academic courses in the upper grades.
- (2) At present only ten percent of the pupils who enter high school intend to go to university.
- (3) An opportunity for a good position is given more frequently as a reason for dropping out from the larger schools than from the smaller schools.
- (4) A lack of interest in school, need to help at home, and unsuitability of curriculum are more frequently given as reasons for dropping out in smaller schools.
- (5) Drop-outs in the superior intelligence class tend to be due to economic reasons, and a lack of interest; in the inferior class to discouragement because of grade repetition.
- (6) Drop-outs are four times as prevalent in the low income group.

(7) Office jobs attract the largest number of girls, and trades the largest number of boys.

The Committee recommended that the schools should give a general education which provides for the cultural opportunities and which deals more fully with the practical problems in life. High schools should teach what is involved in marriage, in buying and selling, and in running a home.

The Canadian Research Committee undertook the task of surveying the educational situation in Canada. It gave educators a broad overview of the drop-out question, and indicated that the problem was not confined to any one area or province. Since it was a survey, it could do no more than give a general picture of the whole situation. It covered only a few major centres in each province and therefore omitted large areas of the country.

The study indicated the seriousness of the situation yet made only general recommendations because of the vastness of the field covered. The study was based on the teachers' or principals' opinions, and, although drop-outs may have been consulted in some cases, it was not a general practice. The survey did not include pupil reactions to the curriculum, the length of the school year, extra-curricular activities, and other pertinent factors. It made no allowance for pupils' suggestions, recommendations, and criticisms of the school system.

The survey does give a sound background for a detailed study of a limited section of the country at a particular grade level designed to reveal the particular difficulties in that area and to provide a basis for recommendations for improving the situation.

CHAPTER II

METHODS OF SECURING AND ORGANIZING DATA

1. Initiating the Study

It was decided that the area under investigation for this study was to be the Southern Alberta High School Inspectorate, hereafter known as Southern Alberta. The study was to include all drop-outs in Grade XI and Grade XII, except those in one-room high schools, over the period from 1947 to 1950 inclusive.

It was recognized that there would be many difficulties in conducting this study. In many of the smaller schools there was a large turn-over of teaching staff. In many school systems accurate records of pupils were not kept. It was decided that the study would include all high schools of two or more rooms. The reasons for omitting the one-room high schools are given below.

- (1) Pupils seldom go further than Grade X in the one-room high school. After Grade X the pupils continuing go to other schools giving a wider range of subjects.
- (2) If pupils do go to another school without advising the principal, they may wrongly be considered as drop-outs.
- (3) If these pupils leave school at the Grade X level, they have not yet attained the lower limit set for the study.

(4) The staff changes so frequently in one-room schools that an accurate drop-out estimate cannot be had.

In order to secure an accurate sample of the drop-out population in Southern Alberta it was decided to attempt to obtain responses from the whole population of drop-outs in the area between 1947 and 1950. The sample included all the high schools in Southern Alberta, from two-room rural high schools to the three largest centres, the Alexandra High School in Medicine Hat, the Lethbridge Collegiate Institute in Lethbridge, and the Taber High School in Taber.

2. The Questionnaire

In preparing the questionnaire it was felt that the recording of answers should be made as simple as was consistent with acquiring the desired information. Accordingly, the answers to the questionnaire were given by words or phrases, check marks, X's, or by the encircling of one of the given letters. When the questionnaire was completed several principals and staff members in Southern Alberta schools offered their suggestions and criticisms. The final product was submitted to the thesis committee and was finally approved. A copy appears in the appendix.

3. The Sample

Early in 1950, at the investigator's request, Mr. C. B.

Johnson furnished a list of all the principals in his inspectorate. The investigator then sent a letter to each principal asking for names, addresses, and if possible, the intelligence quotients of all the drop-outs over the years 1947 to 1950. A majority of the principals replied within two months. Some had no records of the drop-outs in their schools. Several replies included names, addresses, and intelligence quotients, but the majority could furnish only names and addresses. Therefore, it was necessary to omit the I.Q. as a possible drop-out factor. A few principals were newly appointed and could find no records of the drop-outs from previous years. The result was that the list was quite inadequate.

Since further search was necessary, the principals of both the Lethbridge Collegiate Institute of Lethbridge, and the Alexandra High School in Medicine Hat kindly permitted the investigator to use their records. A final list of 503 names and addresses was thus compiled.

The prepared questionnaire together with self-addressed envelopes from the investigator were then sent to each of the drop-outs. After these were mailed, an accurate summary of the progress of the return of the questionnaires was kept. Sixty-six letters were returned by postal employees because no forwarding address had been left. After a period of one month only seventy-three completed questionnaires had been returned even though some of these came from as far as the

Royal Canadian Mounted Police barracks in Ontario and from Navy men on the Atlantic coast.

In view of the small number of answers it was found necessary to send post card reminders to all the other drop-outs who had apparently received their questionnaires but had not answered them. In the next two months another thirty-two questionnaires were received. It appeared doubtful that a further reminder would be useful. Ultimately, the sample was considered complete with one hundred and five completed questionnaires.

In addition, the investigator interviewed ten boys and ten girls, living near Taber, who had left school in Grade XI and Grade XII without receiving high school diplomas. The questionnaire used in the statistical study was employed as a guide for the personal interviews. The purpose of this local study was two-fold:

- (1) to compare the reasons of Taber drop-outs with those of the entire population,
- (2) to gather more insight into the reasons given by drop-outs.

In this study it was necessary to make an appointment with the person concerned and interview him or her at a mutually convenient time and place. After rapport had been established the interviews lasted from one to three hours. The results of these interviews were gratifying and the aims

set forth for this portion of the study were satisfactorily achieved.

4. Limitations of the Study

Some of the limitations of the study are given below:

- (1) While the study was designed to include all the drop-outs in the Southern Alberta area, because of the principals' inability to supply the names of all those leaving school in Grade XI and Grade XII from 1947 to 1950, the sample was not as complete as was originally expected.
- (2) The original plan to ascertain whether dropping out was related to the pupil's I.Q. was not carried out because of lack of information. Although some principals gave the I.Q., others did not have the data.
- (3) The pupils to whom the questionnaires were sent did not all reply. Actually only about twenty percent of the original sample make up the present study.
- (4) In some cases every question was not answered fully by the pupils.
- (5) All answers were opinions or based on the opinions of the pupils.
- (6) Some of the interviewees did not discuss the problem freely, perhaps because they knew the investigator to be a teacher himself.

It must be assumed that a cross-section of the drop-

out population of Southern Alberta answered the questionnaire; approximately the same number of rural as urban questionnaires was received. Although the information is dependent on opinion, it should be considered valid in so far as it represents the actual experiences of the drop-outs.

In addition, the drop-outs were asked to offer suggestions which would assist curriculum builders and educators to shape a high school program that might be satisfactory to a larger percentage of our school population. The omission of some information in a few cases did not alter conclusions since a large majority answered all the questions.

Most of the interviewees appeared pleased to have been chosen as the ones to express their views on such important matters as the curriculum and education generally. They were very frank and took a mature attitude toward the work being undertaken.

It is necessary to equate the problems of the drop-outs in the Taber Division with those of the drop-outs in the entire area under investigation so that a comparison of the two studies may be permitted. Such a comparison is justifiable since the personal interviews constitute a more intensive study of the smaller number of drop-outs.

CHAPTER III

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SAMPLE

This chapter analyzes the sample by sex, age at the time of dropping out, and the grade last attended. The occupations of the parents were studied to discover, if possible, a relation between parental occupations and numbers of drop-outs. In addition, the nationalities and the school attainment of the parents were studied. The distance a pupil travels to school was also considered as a possible factor in dropping out.

The general sample consisted of 105 boys and girls from the cities, towns, and rural areas of Southern Alberta. This sample was made up of 60 boys and 45 girls born between the years 1928 and 1934.

1. Ages of the Drop-outs

Table I gives the pupils' ages and grades at the time of dropping out. Sixty-one per cent of the grade XI boys and 80 per cent of the girls were seventeen years of age or less when they left school. This indicates that the majority of the Grade XI drop-outs had at least average ability,¹

¹ Average ability is taken to mean an I.Q. range of 90 to 110. Above average ability is taken to mean an I.Q. range of over 110.

since they were not likely to have failed a grade if they were seventeen years of age and in Grade XI. Sixteen per cent of the boys and 8 per cent of the girls dropping out in Grade XI were eighteen years of age. This may indicate that they began school at seven years of age or failed a year because of a prolonged illness, a transfer, or a lack of ability. Only 10 per cent of the Grade XI boys were nineteen or twenty years of age, possibly indicating a previous failure.

TABLE I

PUPILS' AGE AT DATE OF DROP-OUT

AGE	GRADE XI				GRADE XII			
	BOYS		GIRLS		BOYS		GIRLS	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
15	1	3	2	8	1	3	1	5
16	8	26	8	32	3	10	3	15
17	10	32	10	40	6	21	6	30
18	5	16	2	8	9	32	7	35
19	2	7	0	0	3	10	1	5
20	1	3	0	0	1	3	0	0
Not given	4	13	3	12	6	21	2	10
Total	31	100	25	100	29	100	20	100

From Table I it is apparent that 66 per cent of the

boys and 85 per cent of the girls in Grade XII were eighteen years of age or less when they left school. This also indicates average or above average ability. Only 13 per cent of the boys and 5 per cent of the girls dropping out in Grade XII were nineteen years old or over.

The findings and implications of Table I are that a large majority of the Grade XI and Grade XII drop-outs have the ability to graduate from our school system. These findings were corroborated by the information received from some of the principals. The median I.Q. for about 150 drop-outs indicated average ability.²

2. Nationality of the Parents

Is the nationality of the parent an important factor in determining the drop-out? Do pupils leave school because of language difficulties?

From Table II it is apparent that 30 per cent of the parents of the drop-outs were Canadian born. In addition, 79 per cent of the parents were either Canadian, American, English, Irish, or Scottish. All these are English speaking. The remaining 21 per cent of the parents were of non-English speaking nationality. The pupils of this minority group may

²These drop-outs were some of the original sample of 503 names and not necessarily the ones that answered the questionnaire.

have had some language difficulties.

TABLE II

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGES OF DROP-OUTS
BY NATIONALITIES

Nationality	Boys	Girls	Total	Percent
Canadian	19	12	31	30
U. S. A.	19	7	26	25
English	9	12	21	20
Japanese	4	2	6	6
Russian	2	4	6	6
Austrian	1	1	2	2
Czechoslovakian	1	1	2	2
Irish	1	1	2	2
Italian	1	1	2	2
Norwegian	1	1	2	2
Scottish	1	1	2	2
Hungarian	0	1	1	1
Polish	1	0	1	1
Swedish	0	1	1	1
Total	60	45	105	102

Assuming that the ratio of the English-speaking population is three or four times as large as the non-English speaking population, there does not seem to be any large

difference between the relative numbers of drop-outs from either of these groups. It may be assumed, therefore, that language difficulties due to the nationality of the parents is not a major factor in dropping out in Grade XI and Grade XII.

3. Parents' School Attainment

Does the school attainment of the parents have any bearing on the attainment of the pupils? Do drop-outs occur more frequently in homes of low educational status?

Table III shows that only 1 per cent of the fathers and 2 per cent of the mothers of drop-outs did not attend school at all. In addition, it may be noted that 61 per cent of the fathers and 43 per cent of the mothers received only a public school education.

Only about one-eighth, 12 per cent, of the parents graduated from a high school or continued with further education. In other words, 89 per cent of the fathers and 86 per cent of the mothers of these drop-outs did not graduate from a high school. Of these, more than one-half obtained only a public school education.

The findings indicate that, as a rule, pupils get as much as or more education than did their parents. However, there seems to be a direct bearing of the parents' education on the education of the pupil, whether it be due to:

- (1) the economic status of the parents,
- (2) the lack of interest on the part of the parents,
- (3) the occupation of the parents.

TABLE III

THE PARENTS' SCHOOL ATTAINMENT EXPRESSED
IN NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES

SCHOOL ATTAINMENT	F A T H E R S				M O T H E R S			
	Boys'	Girls'	Total	Per Cent	Boys'	Girls'	Total	Per Cent
Did not attend	1	0	1	1	2	0	2	2
Completed Grade VIII	34	30	64	61	29	16	45	43
Some High School	12	14	26	25	16	26	42	40
Graduated From High School	5	0	5	5	3	1	4	4
Some College Training	5	1	6	6	7	2	9	9
University Degree	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1
Unknown	2	0	2	2	2	0	2	2
Total	60	45	105	101	60	45	105	101

4. Distance from School

Is the distance a pupil lives from school a factor in

his continuing or discontinuing school?

TABLE IV

DISTANCE FROM SCHOOL IN MILES

DISTANCE IN MILES	Boys	Girls	Total	Percent
Less than one	34	24	58	55
Two	4	6	10	10
Three	4	2	6	6
Four	2	2	4	4
Five	2	2	4	4
Six to ten	6	5	11	10
Over ten	8	4	12	11
Total	60	45	105	100

From Table IV the findings are that more than 50 per cent of the drop-outs lived within one mile of a high school. 75 per cent of these ex-pupils were within four miles, or a reasonable walking distance from a high school. Only 21 per cent of the pupils lived over six miles from school and these were vanned to the schools.

Since schools are easily accessible to a large majority of the drop-outs, it is apparent that the distance of a high school from a pupil's home cannot be considered as an important factor in determining dropping out.

5. Occupations of the Fathers of the Drop-outs

Is the occupational group to which the father belongs a factor in the rate of dropping out? Are school leavers influenced by the economic status of their families?

The occupations were classified as shown below:³

- (1) Professional - members of all recognized professions, including journalists, and musicians.
- (2) Proprietors and managers - owners and managers of coal mines, lumber mills, construction companies, transportation companies, wholesale and retail stores, and elevator agents.
- (3) Clerical - ticket agents, travellers, and salesmen.
- (4) Skilled - foremen in lumber mills, mines, manufacturing companies, and construction.
- (5) Farmers - owners and managers of farms.
- (6) Semi-skilled - barbers, butchers, fitters, operators, linemen, firemen, and policemen.
- (7) Unskilled - laborers (farm), miners, janitors, and lumbermen.

Table V shows the distribution of the drop-outs according to the occupation of the father. Of all the drop-outs only 3 per cent of the boys' parents and 2 per cent of the

³ The Canadian Research Committee on Practical Education, Your Child Leaves School, Toronto, 1950. p.13.

TABLE V

RELATION OF DROP-OUTS TO OCCUPATION OF FATHER

OCCUPATION	Boys		Girls	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Professional	3	5	4	9
Proprietor and Manager	7	12	7	16
Clerical	2	3	1	2
Skilled	5	8	4	9
Farmers	20	33	15	33
Semi-skilled	10	17	4	9
Unskilled	10	17	7	16
Deceased	3	5	3	7
Total	60	100	45	101

girls' parents were in clerical occupations. 17 per cent of the boys' parents and 25 per cent of the girls' parents were in either the professional, or the proprietor and manager groups. One-third of all the drop-outs, 33 per cent, were those whose fathers were farmers. Approximately another third, 34 per cent, of the boys who left school were those whose fathers' occupations were semi-skilled or unskilled. 25 per cent of the girls who left school were daughters of semi-skilled or unskilled laborers.

Table V shows that there is a strong relationship between the occupation of the father and the rate of dropping

out. Since Southern Alberta is largely a farming area it would be expected that a large percentage of the drop-outs would be farm children. However, there are also large percentages of school leavers from the semi-skilled and unskilled occupational groups, while only comparably small percentages of drop-outs come from professional, and skilled families. It may, therefore, be assumed that there is a direct relationship between the pupil's chances of dropping out and the occupation of his father.

6. Summary

Since the majority of the drop-outs in Grade XI and Grade XII have average or above average ability, they are not leaving school because of a lack of ability. Language difficulties are not significant either, since most of the parents were born and educated in English-speaking countries. Although most parents now consider a high school education both useful and valuable,⁴ over 85 per cent of the parents did not graduate from a high school. About two-thirds of the parents of drop-outs come from semi-skilled, unskilled, or farming occupations.

The research done in this chapter indicates that although drop-outs usually acquire more education than their parents did, the parents' education exerts an influence on

⁴ See Chapter V.

the drop-outs' educational achievement. The study also indicates that dropping out occurs more frequently in families of low economic status, i.e., in semi-skilled, unskilled and farming occupations. These findings agree with those of the Canadian Research Committee study for the whole of Canada.

CHAPTER IV

REASONS FOR ATTENDING AND LEAVING SCHOOL

This chapter investigates the changes in the vocational plans of school leavers while they were still in the high schools. The kinds of extra-curricular activities they participated in are examined and those activities which they now consider valuable are enumerated. The courses that the pupils liked at school are listed in order of preference. The reasons given by drop-outs for their school attendance and their reasons for dropping out are enumerated and correlated with the other factors discussed in this chapter.

1. Modification of Vocational Plan

Do drop-outs change their vocational plans from the time they enter high school to the time they leave school? Do such changes endanger their chances of graduating?

From Table VI it may be observed that almost two-thirds of the drop-outs (64 per cent) modified their vocational plans during their high school careers. Thirty-seven per cent of these changed their plans from a university course to a technical or commercial course. Of the boys who changed their vocational plans, 35 per cent are undecided at present, 20 per cent are farming, and 45 per cent are in unskilled trades.

TABLE VI

MODIFICATION OF VOCATIONAL PLAN
DURING HIGH SCHOOL

PLANS	Boys	Girls	Total	Percentage
Changed from a University course to a Technical or Commercial course	20	19	39	37
Changed from one non-University course to another	16	12	28	27
Did not change plans	17	11	28	27
No definite goal	7	3	10	10
TOTAL	60	45	105	101

Of the entire sample, 27 per cent did not alter their plans after entering the High School but of these none had planned vocations demanding university training. The girls in this group all wanted to be office workers or stenographers. Of the boys, 77 per cent wanted to become farmers, and 23 per cent wished to enter the semi-skilled trades. 10 per cent of the drop-outs had not decided on a vocation when they entered the high school, and were still undecided when they left school at least two years later.

Almost three-quarters, 74 per cent, of the drop-outs

who enter high schools modify their vocational plans or have no plans at all. It is probable that such a change in the pupil's vocational plans, without a qualified counselor's assistance,¹ is detrimental to his chances of receiving a high school diploma. Although this change in program may be a normal process, it can be assumed that the lack of proper vocational training² at the present time³ increases the probability of dropping out.

2. Extra-curricular Activities

Are extra-curricular activities considered by drop-outs as important factors in a high school education? Are the pupils receiving and participating in those activities which they can best use in post-school situations?

Table VII indicates the extra-curricular activities. The three in which the pupils participated most frequently, were , in order of preference, athletics, dramatics, and music for the boys, and athletics, music, and dramatics for the girls. The activity in which the least number of pupils participated was a study of political affairs for both the boys and the girls.

The three activities that the pupils think would have

¹See Chapter VIII.

²See Chapter V.

³1947 to 1950.

TABLE VII

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES	PARTICIPATED IN				SHOULD HAVE PARTICIPATED IN			
	Boys	Per Cent	Girls	Per Cent	Boys	Per Cent	Girls	Per Cent
Art	12	20	10	22	6	10	2	4
Athletics	39	63	28	62	6	10	2	4
Debating and Speech Training	7	12	3	7	14	23	16	36
Dramatics	18	30	14	31	4	7	2	4
Hobby groups	11	18	7	16	11	18	6	13
Journalism	7	12	6	13	11	18	4	9
Music	15	25	23	51	5	8	4	9
A study of political affairs	3	5	2	4	10	17	6	13
Religion	11	18	5	11	6	10	9	20
Student Gov't	8	13	4	9	10	17	9	20

been of most value to them are, for the boys: debating and speech training, journalism, and some hobbies; for the girls: debating and speech training, student government, and religion.

All the pupils participated in at least two extra-curricular activities but regret that they failed to participate in one or two others. It may, therefore, be assumed that these activities are important to a pupil's wholesome

development. More than one-third of all drop-outs, 36 per cent, consider debating and speech training an important extra-curricular activity; therefore a special effort should be made to introduce it into the present curriculum. It may also be advisable to introduce some hobby clubs, both because pupils who leave school desire it and because the shorter working hours of the present day require positive outside interests of this kind.

TABLE VIII

FAVORITE SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS	Boys	Girls	Total
Mathematics	25	13	38
Social Studies	13	16	29
Chemistry	16	6	22
English	7	12	19
Physics	18	1	19
Shop	18	0	18
Typing	4	13	17
Biology	5	7	12
Dramatics	5	7	12
Music	4	6	10
Art	4	5	9
Bookkeeping	1	8	9
Psychology	1	6	7
Home Economics	0	6	6
Vocations & Guidance	2	3	5
French	2	2	4
Geology	4	0	4
Physical Education	3	1	4
Business Fundamentals	0	3	3
Law	1	2	3
Stenography	0	3	3
Health	1	0	1
Sociology	1	0	1

3. Favorite Subjects

What courses are favorites among the drop-outs? Are the compulsory subjects among the liked or disliked? Would additional courses in any field retain pupils who are otherwise dropping out?

Even with school leavers the compulsory subjects and the academic electives top the list of favorites. The three most popular courses with the boys were mathematics, physics, and shop. With the girls the favorites were social studies, commercial courses, and mathematics. Shop was listed as one of the favorite subjects by 30 per cent of the boys, while home economics was listed by only 13 per cent of the girls. Sixty per cent of the girls listed commercial subjects as one of the favorites.

One of the reasons academic courses topped the list may have been that the majority of the smaller schools offered only an academic program. Nevertheless technical and commercial subjects ranked high in the list of favorites. This fact demonstrates the necessity of increasing facilities for commercial and technical electives.

4. Reasons for Attending High School

Drop-outs explained why they continued at school as long as they did by selecting three of the eleven given reasons. Since each was permitted to choose three reasons,

TABLE IX

REASONS GIVEN FOR ATTENDING HIGH SCHOOL

REASONS	Boys	Girls	Total	Percent
High School trained them for a job	34	36	70	67
They liked to go to school	21	30	51	49
It was a natural thing to do after Grade IX	30	11	41	39
Their parents insisted they go	22	11	33	31
They wanted to take part in sports	15	7	22	21
Most of their friends went to High School	13	8	21	20
They liked to study	9	11	20	19
They wanted to meet new friends	5	4	9	9
Some people they admire have H. S. Education	3	3	6	6
High School prepared them for marriage	1	2	3	3
Law required them to go	0	0	0	0
Other reasons	12	3	15	14

the total need not equal one hundred per cent. Provision was also made for additional information.

From Table IX it is apparent that a majority of the boys and girls, 67 per cent, continued school because it

trained them for a job. Thirty girls, 67 per cent, and twenty-one boys, 35 per cent, went to school because they liked to go. One of the three reasons given by thirty boys, 50 per cent, was that it was the natural thing to do after Grade IX. Parental insistence that pupils go to school was advanced as a reason by eleven girls, 24 per cent, and twenty-two boys, 37 per cent. This was given as a reason by those who had no vocational plans in mind.

The four reasons given by drop-outs for attending school, in order of frequency, are listed below:

- (1) It trained them for jobs, 67 per cent.
- (2) They liked to go to school, 49 per cent.
- (3) It was the natural thing to do after Grade IX, 39 per cent.
- (4) The parents insisted the pupils go to school, 31 per cent.

Of the twelve boys who gave other reasons for continuing school:

- (1) seven wanted more education to insure better jobs,
- (2) three wanted to go to university,
- (3) one did not want to get out on his own too early in life,
- (4) one went because he had no trouble passing his grade.

Of the three girls giving other reasons for continuing school:

- (1) one wanted to become a nurse,
- (2) one went because high school education taught her to meet and think out problems for herself,
- (3) one was undecided as to what she wanted to do and just went to do something.

Schools are succeeding in holding the pupils' interests when they continue to come to school for such reasons as: the high school trains one for a job, it prepares pupils for marriage, pupils like to go to school, or they like to study.

However, more than one-third, 39 per cent, of the pupils gave as one of their reasons, the fact that it was the natural thing to do after passing the last grade. It was evident that in such cases there might be a lack of interest. These pupils were not looking ahead toward some goal or level of achievement but rather backwards to their last completed grade. In addition, almost one-third, 31 per cent, of the pupils went to school because their parents insisted that they go. This indicates other defects in the school system. The schools were not inducing these pupils to come to school; rather the parents were forcing them to go. It was to be expected then, that when the pressure was relaxed, because of financial or other difficulties in the home, the pupils took advantage of the opportunity and dropped out of school.

As indicated in the preceding paragraph, more than one-

third of the high school drop-outs do not have a wholesome attitude towards the school. As long as pupils continue to come to school only because they passed the last grade or because their parents insist that they go, the schools can expect a fair percentage of drop-outs. Reasons which indicate a lack of interest in school work on the part of the students are quite frequently used by drop-outs

5. Reasons for Leaving School

The drop-outs were given seventeen probable reasons for leaving school. Provision was also made for additional reasons they may have had. Each drop-out chose the three reasons that applied to him and marked these 1, 2, 3, in order of importance. The results are tabulated in Table X.

From Table X it may be observed that the three main reasons chosen by the boys were also the three main reasons chosen by the girls. In order of importance they were:

- (1) dropped out to look for a job, 52 per cent;
- (2) dropped out because of curriculum deficiencies, 29 per cent;
- (3) dropped out because of poor teaching, 28 per cent.

Other important reasons for leaving school were poor grades at school, given by 20 per cent of the sample, and failure in some subjects, given by 16 per cent of the drop-outs. It should be noted that of the twelve boys who left

school because of failure in some courses, eleven failed English, three failed mathematics courses, two failed social studies, and two failed a foreign language. Of the five girls who reported failing courses, four failed English, one failed social studies and one failed a foreign language. Only 10 per cent of the drop-outs, 9 boys and 2 girls, left school primarily because of financial difficulties. 7 per cent left because of illness. There were no pupils to whom a high school was not available and no pupils left school because parents were not interested in the pupils' further training.

Some of the other reasons given by pupils were:

- (1) dropped out because of lack of interest in school work, 22 per cent;
- (2) dropped out because of the offer of a good job, 9 per cent.

Chart I supplements Table X. The information was reclassified into the following three groups:⁴

A. Reasons relating to the school

1. Unsuitability of the curriculum - not getting what was wanted, courses unrelated to vocational plan,

⁴The purpose of this reclassification was to permit a closer comparison between the reasons for dropping out as given by school leavers in Southern Alberta over the period 1947-1950, and the reasons given for the whole of Canada as presented by the 1948 study, "Your Child Leaves School", by the Canadian Research Committee on Practical Education. p.19

TABLE X
REASONS FOR LEAVING HIGH SCHOOL

REASONS	BOYS				GIRLS				PER CENT	
	FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE	SUB-TOTAL	FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE	SUB-TOTAL		
To look for a job	16	16	4	36	12	5	2	19	55	52
Not getting the courses wanted	5	9	4	18	8	3	1	12	30	29
Poor teachers	7	5	4	16	3	8	2	13	29	28
Low grades at school	6	7	2	15	3	3	0	6	21	20
Financial difficulties	9	1	1	11	2	5	1	8	19	18
Courses unrelated to vocational plans	2	4	6	12	1	4	1	6	18	17
Failed some subjects	2	2	8	12	0	1	4	5	17	16
Needed at home	5	1	4	10	4	2	1	7	17	16
Went to technical school	2	1	5	8	2	0	4	6	14	13
Marriage or plans for marriage	0	0	1	1	3	3	2	8	9	9

TABLE X (Continued from Page 37)

REASONS FOR LEAVING HIGH SCHOOL

	BOYS				GIRLS					
REASONS	FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE	SUB-TOTAL	FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE	SUB-TOTAL	TOTAL	PER CENT
Weak student activity program	0	1	5	6	0	2	0	2	8	8
Illness	2	2	0	4	3	0	0	3	7	7
Friends did not go to high school	0	3	0	3	0	0	1	1	4	4
Sibling in school both could not go	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	2	2
Could not dress as well as others	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
High school not available	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Parents disinterested in further training	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Others	4	6	7	17	4	7	4	15	32	30
TOTAL	60	59	53	172	45	43	23	111	283	270

weak student activity program, enrolled in a technical school.

2. Lack of ability - low grades, failed some subjects.
3. Lack of interest - no interest in school, friends did not go.

B. Economic reasons

1. Desire to earn money - left to look for a job.
2. Family income - financial difficulties, brother or sister in school and both could not go, could not dress as well as the others.
3. Needed at home.

C. Personal reasons

1. Opportunity for position - a good job offered.
2. Illness.
3. Others - marriage or plans for marriage.

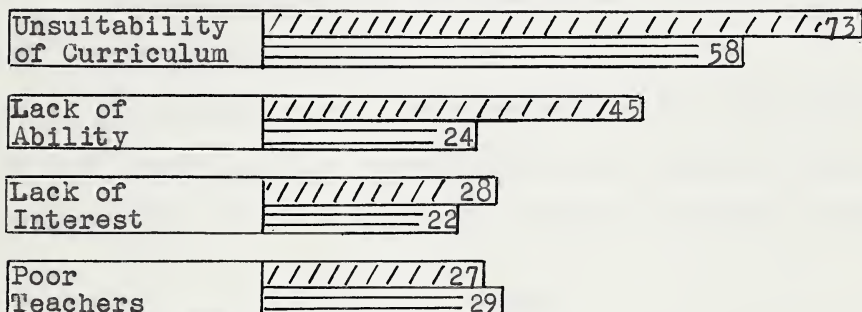
Chart I indicates that 73 per cent of all the boys who left school gave the unsuitability of the curriculum as one of their reasons for leaving. 58 per cent of the girls gave the same reason. Lack of ability was given as a reason by 45 per cent of the boys and 24 per cent of the girls. Of the economic reasons, the desire to earn money was the most significant. It was advanced by 60 per cent of the boys and 42 per cent of the girls. This reason seems closely associated with the various reasons related to the school.

It is apparent that the reasons relating to the school are the most important and are more frequent among the boys

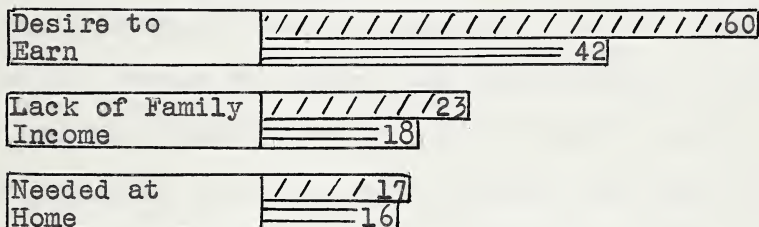
CHART I

REASONS FOR DROP-OUTS OF BOYS AND GIRLS EXPRESSED IN PERCENT*

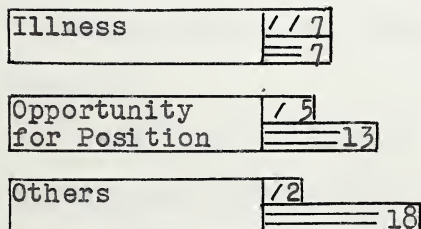
A. REASONS RELATING TO THE SCHOOL



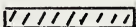

B. ECONOMIC REASONS



C. PERSONAL REASONS



PERCENT 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80

BOYS  GIRLS 

* percentages are overlapping, as several reasons apply to any one drop-out.

than the girls. Economic reasons are second in importance and also more frequent among boys. Personal reasons for dropping out are least important, and are more frequent among the girls.

All the pupils did not give three reasons for dropping out. Some gave only one.

The reasons given are consistent with the other data of this study and are comparable to the reasons given in the study by the Canadian Research Council on Practical Education.

6. Summary

Most of the drop-outs stayed in school as long as they did because it trained them for a job or because they liked to go. While at school they participated in pleasing extra-curricular activities such as athletics, music, and dramatics. At present, most drop-outs realize the value of participating in a more varied program of activities while at school. Some of those recommended for the schools are debating and speech training, journalism, hobby craft, student government, and religion.

A high percentage of the drop-outs changed their vocational plans during their high school careers. All the changes from matriculation were to technical or commercial programs. In these areas they found a lack of suitable courses. Since the curriculum was not suited to their needs

they lost interest in their school work, received low or failing marks and eventually left school to look for jobs.

CHAPTER V

ATTITUDES TOWARDS SCHOOL

This chapter is concerned chiefly with the attitudes of the drop-outs towards various phases of the school curriculum and training. The drop-outs were asked to criticize high school training as a preparation for post-school living. They were also asked to estimate the help in vocational planning given them by various school, home, and community agencies.

The answers given were very brief. They were merely given by checking one of the three possible answers namely:

- (1) highly satisfied
- (2) moderately satisfied (about average)
- (3) dissatisfied (disappointed) with the particular training or experience. Further comments on these topics are given by drop-outs in Chapters VIII and IX.

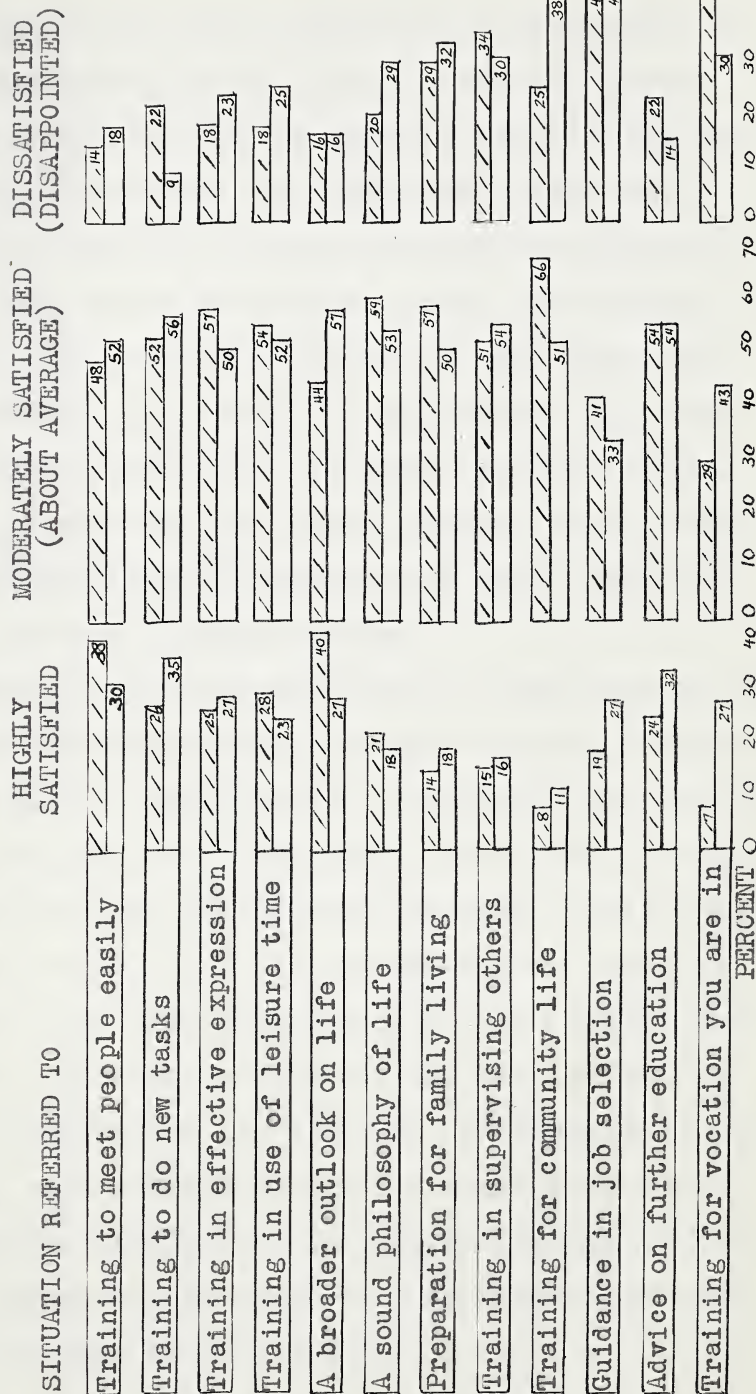
1. Attitudes of Drop-outs Towards High School Training

Chart II gives the boys' and girls' attitudes towards each of the questions asked. The results are given in percentages to permit an easier comparison of the two sexes. In a very high percentage of the cases all the questions were answered.

Since this group of drop-outs was assumed to be an

CHART II

SATISFACTION OR DISSATISFACTION WITH THE TRAINING
OR EXPERIENCE OBTAINED BY DROP-OUTS IN HIGH SCHOOL



PERCENT 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

BOYS

GIRLS

accurate sample of the whole population it was further assumed that the answers should closely follow the normal distribution. That is, for any question asked 25 per cent of the population would be very satisfied, 25 per cent would be dissatisfied and 50 per cent would be moderately satisfied. That it was an accurate sample, is verified by the fact that the means of the first and third quartiles for the chart were 25 per cent \pm 2 per cent for both boys and girls. Since there were only three possible answers for each question it was not readily possible to calculate any levels of significance other than by noting the deviations from the mean as they occurred.

From Chart II it is apparent that a large majority of drop-outs are satisfied with the schools' program in training them how to meet people easily. Eighty-six per cent of the boys and 82 per cent of the girls are either moderately or very satisfied with the training received in this field. In the closely related field of undertaking and doing new tasks, 82 per cent of the boys and 91 per cent of the girls were at least moderately satisfied. The areas of writing and speaking effectively, and training for effective use of leisure time, were regarded as about average, with fewer boys dissatisfied than girls. In addition, 84 per cent of the entire sample were satisfied that the high school gave the pupils a broader outlook on life.

However, a large number of drop-outs, 34 per cent of the boys and 30 per cent of the girls, were dissatisfied with the training they received in supervising and directing the activities of others. Less than one half of this number were highly satisfied. Training in a closely related field, that of civic and community life, was also considered by drop-outs to be inadequate, with only 8 per cent of the boys and 11 per cent of the girls highly satisfied. More than three times this number were disappointed.

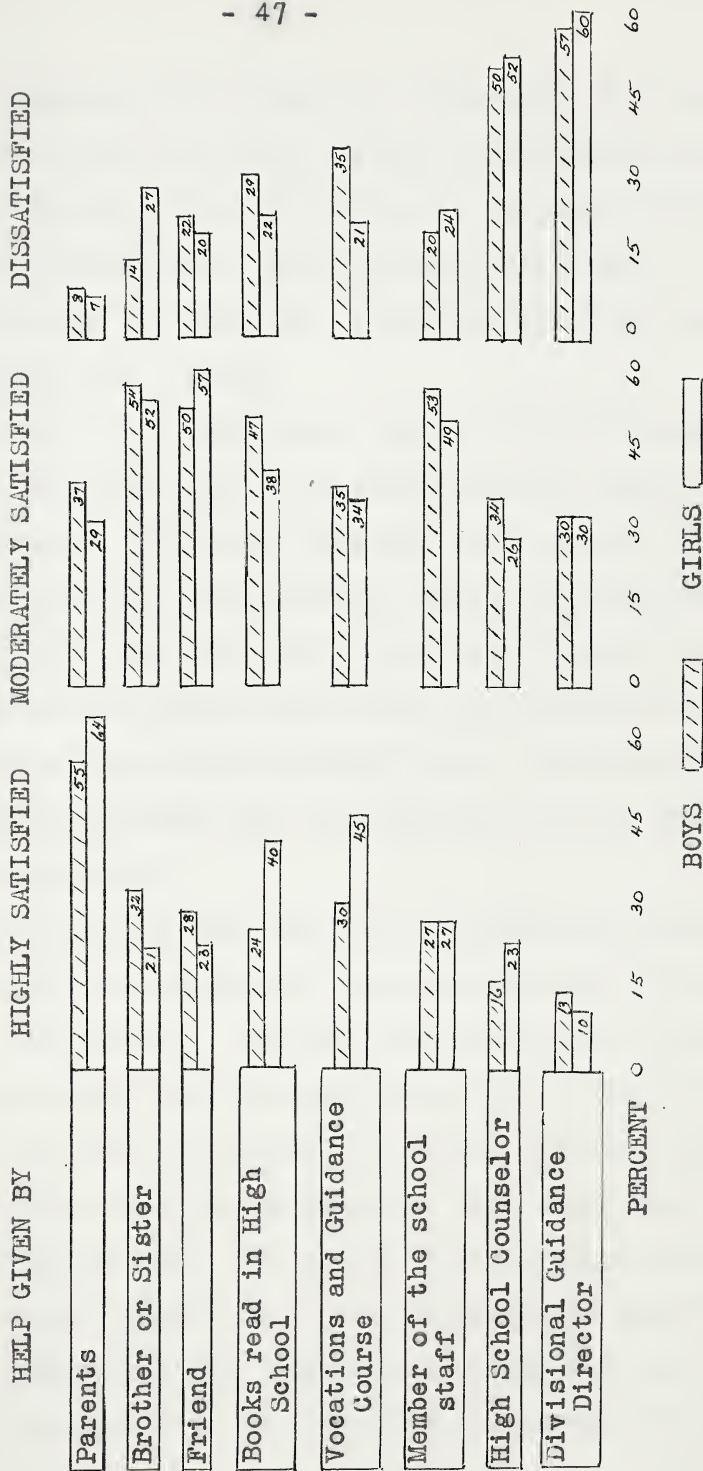
Information and advice on further education was accepted as satisfactory by more girls than boys. In addition only 36 per cent of the boys and 70 per cent of the girls regarded their high school training as satisfactory for the vocation they are now in. Almost two-thirds of the boys were dissatisfied. Their comments are discussed fully in Chapters VII and VIII. Both boys and girls were very disappointed with the guidance and counsel given them in the selection of jobs. 40 per cent of the entire sample were dissatisfied. Chart III enlarges on this topic.

2. Assistance in Planning Their Futures

In Chart III, the drop-outs were asked to indicate as in Chart II, their attitudes towards the help given them by school and out-of-school agencies in planning their futures. It may be observed that the parents gave their children much

CHART III

THE ATTITUDES OF THE DROP-OUTS TOWARDS THE HELP THEY RECEIVED IN PLANNING THEIR FUTURE



assistance in planning their futures. Fifty-five per cent of the boys and 64 per cent of the girls were highly satisfied with this parental aid. Less than 10 per cent of the drop-outs were dissatisfied. The drop-outs were also reasonably satisfied with the help they received from their brothers, sisters, and friends.

40 per cent of the girls were highly satisfied with the vocational information they received from the books they read in high school. The boys' comments were normally distributed. The Vocations and Guidance course was considered unsatisfactory by 35 per cent of the boys and 21 per cent of the girls. Since there were also 30 per cent of the boys and 45 per cent of the girls who were highly satisfied with the course, the discrepancy may have been due to the method of presenting the course.

The replies of the drop-outs to the assistance given by some member of the school staff in planning their futures were normally distributed. However, the assistance given by high school counselors was disappointing. About one-half of the drop-outs were not satisfied. It should be noted that many of the dissatisfied pupils remarked that there was no counselor in their school. The amount of vocational advice given to high school pupils by divisional guidance directors was also very disappointing. Only about 10 per cent of the drop-outs were pleased with the assistance received while 57

per cent of the boys and 60 per cent of the girls were displeased. Many drop-outs remarked that there were no guidance directors in their divisions. It is apparent that more vocational advice is expected by drop-outs from a vocational supervisor at the divisional level.

3. Parental Attitudes Towards the Value of High School Education

It was considered possible that many of the drop-outs resulted from a lack of appreciation by parents and pupils of the value of a secondary education. Therefore, the drop-outs were asked a question in which they could express their

TABLE XI

PARENTAL ATTITUDE TOWARD HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

DEGREE OF USEFULNESS	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
Very useful and valuable	43	33	76	72
Useful and valuable	14	11	25	24
Has no particular use or value	1	1	2	2
Has certain disadvantages	2	0	2	2
Is a distinct waste of time and money	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	60	45	105	100

parents' and their own view of the value of a high school education. The views attributed to the parents were, of course, their attitudes as reported by the pupils.

It is apparent from Table XI that the majority of the drop-outs did not result from lack of interest on the parents' part. Almost three-quarters, or 72 per cent, of all the parents are reported as regarding high school very useful. Another 24 per cent of the parents thought a high school education was useful and valuable. Only 4 per cent of the parents impressed their children that secondary education had no particular use or value or had certain disadvantages. No parents said high school was a distinct waste of time and money.

TABLE XII

PUPIL ATTITUDE TOWARD HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

DEGREE OF USEFULNESS	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
Very useful and valuable	36	31	67	64
Useful and valuable	20	12	32	30
Has no particular use or value	0	0	0	0
Has certain disadvantages	4	2	6	6
Is a distinct waste of time and money	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	60	45	105	100

4. Attitudes of Drop-outs Toward the Value of a High School Education

The answers to the value of the high school education from the drop-outs themselves as recorded in Table XII corresponded very closely to that of their parents. 94 per cent of the drop-outs said that such an education was at least useful and valuable. Only 6 per cent said it had certain disadvantages. These are not specified here.

5. Summary

In view of the above attitudes towards high school education, it cannot be stated that pupils' or parents' attitudes were factors in dropping out. In fact, the home and community are working to give children assistance where possible. The drop-outs also consider that the schools are successfully accomplishing their purpose inasmuch as they are training the pupils to meet people easily, to undertake and do new tasks and to get a broader outlook on life.

In the opinion of the drop-outs the schools are not very successful in other fields. Seventy-three per cent of the boys were especially concerned about the lack of training they received for the vocation in which they are now engaged. In addition, the schools are neither giving the pupils enough training in the supervision of others, nor are they training for active participation in civic affairs. In

the fields of guidance and vocational training the teachers and other agencies of the schools are, at best, doing only a mediocre job.

There were very few high school counselors in the schools. Very few other teachers were qualified to give competent assistance to pupils seeking occupational information. At the divisional level little was being done to assist pupils with vocational planning. In other words, the curriculum, the school staffs, and the divisional-level personnel seem to be failing to meet the demands of the present school population

CHAPTER VI

A FOLLOW UP OF THE DROP-OUTS

This chapter is devoted to a follow-up of the drop-outs in the sample. The length of time the drop-outs held their jobs, the income received, and the satisfaction derived from their jobs were studied. In addition, the drop-outs were asked to give their opinions on the adequacy of the high school program in preparing them for post school careers, and in helping them to do their work satisfactorily.

1. Number of Jobs Held

The number of jobs held by drop-outs was studied to determine whether they stayed with the occupation they chose or whether they soon lost interest and left.

It is apparent from Table XIII that 93 per cent of the drop-outs have had three, or fewer than three jobs since leaving school. More than one-half of the sample, 52 per cent, have remained with their first job while 33 per cent of the others are working at their second one. Over the period 1947 to 1950 only 7 per cent of the drop-outs have held four jobs or more. One boy and two girls, who have been attending technical or business schools, have not yet been employed. The occupations of the drop-outs range from farm laborers and cab drivers to sub-contractors, salesmen,

TABLE XIII

NUMBER OF JOBS HELD BY DROP-OUTS
SINCE LEAVING SCHOOL

NO. OF JOBS HELD	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
1	25	28	53	52
2	21	13	34	33
3	7	1	8	8
4	2	1	3	3
5	0	0	0	0
6	2	0	2	2
7	2	0	2	2
8	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	59	43	102	100

and radio technicians, or from unskilled laborers to skilled tradesmen.

It may be concluded, therefore, that drop-outs can and do apply themselves to situations in which they are interested.

2. Drop-outs Classified into Occupational Groups

The occupations of the drop-outs were classified to determine whether school leavers were more prevalent in some fields than in others. This classification was compared with that of the Canadian Research Committee.¹

¹"Your Child Leaves School". p.29.

TABLE XIV

DROP-OUTS CLASSIFIED INTO OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS	BOYS		GIRLS	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
Primary Industries	17	28	0	0
Trades	12	20	0	0
Laborers	9	15	0	0
Office	7	12	16	36
Transportation and Communication	4	7	0	0
Personal Service	0	0	14	31
Sales	3	5	9	20
Factory	2	3	2	4
Miscellaneous	5	8	1	2
Unemployed	1	2	3	7
TOTAL	60	100	45	100

From Table XIV it may be observed that the primary industries claimed 28 per cent of the boys who left school. Trades and office jobs attracted 20 per cent and 12 per cent of the boys respectively. Another 15 per cent of the boys worked as laborers. Only 2 per cent of the boys were unemployed.

More than one-third of the girls, 36 per cent, accepted office jobs, while another 20 per cent were employed in

the sales occupations. 31 per cent of the girls were in personal service occupations. Of the girls, 7 per cent were unemployed.

The three occupational groups which claimed the majority of the boys, 63 per cent, leaving school in the period from 1947 to 1950 were the primary industries, trades, and labor groups. Most of the girls, 87 per cent, were absorbed by the office, sales, and personal service occupations. Generally, the results obtained in this study compare closely with those obtained on a nation-wide scale by the Canadian Research Committee.² The differences are due mainly to regional variations in occupational opportunities.

3. Type of Employment

The jobs in which the drop-outs were engaged were classified under the various types of employment as given in Table XV. It was assumed that a pupil could be regarded as having sufficient reason for leaving school if he were going to own or manage a place of business. If, however, he were working for someone else, then factors other than the job itself were responsible for his leaving school.

From Table XV it is apparent that only 3 per cent of the drop-outs owned or managed their own place of employment. Another 8 per cent of the drop-outs owned a part of the

²Ibid.

TABLE XV

OWNERSHIP OF PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT

TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
Own and manage place of employment	2	1	3	3
Manage place of employment for others	0	0	0	0
Own part of business or farm	8	0	8	8
Work for someone else	49	29	78	74
Other arrangements	1	15	16	15
TOTAL	60	45	105	100

business or farm. The other three-quarters, 74 per cent, of the school leavers worked for someone else. The boy classified under "Other arrangements" was unemployed. Of the girls under the same classification twelve were married and three were unemployed.

It may, therefore, be concluded that only a small minority of the drop-outs leave school to become an owner or manager of a place of business. The other drop-outs leave because of other factors.

4. Income of Drop-outs

Was the possibility of obtaining a large income a fac-

tor in dropping out? Did the given incomes coincide with the type of occupation in which the drop-outs reported they were working?

Every provision was made for the drop-outs to record incomes of various sizes. Since it was assumed that the majority of the drop-outs would be in unskilled and semi-skilled trades the intervals in the questionnaire were smaller in the lower brackets. This assumption proved to be correct.

TABLE XVI

GROSS INCOME FOR DROP-OUTS IN 1950

GROSS INCOME	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
Less than \$1000	18	21	39	37
\$1000 to \$1500	17	12	29	28
\$1500 to \$2000	10	0	10	10
\$2000 to \$3000	13	0	13	12
Over \$3000	2	0	2	2
Other arrangements	0	12	12	11
TOTAL	60	45	105	100

As is apparent from Table XVI, only 14 per cent of the drop-outs received an income over \$2,000.00. About two-thirds, 65 per cent, of the drop-outs received less than \$1,500.00. The twelve girls listed under "Other arrange-

ments" were married and dependent upon their husbands' incomes.

The incomes received by the drop-outs were not excessive and are comparable with those of the "Grade XI and up" drop-outs in the Canadian Research Committee study.³ The average weekly wage earned in Southern Alberta was \$29.41 for the boys, and \$17.92 for the girls, as compared with the Canadian averages of \$24.86 and \$19.27 for boys and girls respectively. Since the incomes of the drop-outs in this study compare closely with those of the drop-outs for the whole of Canada, it may be maintained that there are very few well-paid jobs to which high school pupils may be attracted, thereby causing them to leave school. Although the probability that a drop-out would get a large income is small, the desire to earn money may be partially responsible for some pupils' leaving school.

5. Satisfaction with the Present Job

The drop-outs were asked to express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the job they had. The results were recorded in table XVII.

Satisfaction, to some degree, was expressed by 88 per cent of the drop-outs. Of these, 45 per cent were thoroughly satisfied and would not consider a change. However, a majority

³Canadian Research Committee, 1948. p.52.

of the boys, 57 per cent, were looking for opportunities to obtain better jobs, although they were content with the jobs they had.

It may therefore be said that generally the drop-outs were well adjusted in the world of work.

TABLE XVII

DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH PRESENT JOB

SATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
Thoroughly satisfied	19	28	47	45
Satisfied but would consider a change	34	11	45	43
Somewhat dissatisfied	4	3	7	7
Thoroughly dissatisfied	2	0	2	2
Unemployed	1	3	4	4
TOTAL	60	45	105	100

6. School Training for the Job

The drop-outs were asked to state whether, in their opinion, high school education assisted them in attaining or performing their present jobs satisfactorily.

From Table XVIII it may be observed that more than one-half, 56 per cent, of both the boys and the girls agreed that high school education did help in obtaining or holding their jobs. The reasons they gave are listed as follows:

- (a) High school gave them a broader outlook on life.
- (b) The commercial subjects helped.
- (c) The technical subjects were valuable.
- (d) High school taught them accuracy, neatness and organization of their work.
- (e) The high school training was considered by the employer when one applied for a job.
- (f) The study of vocations was useful in the working world.

Approximately one-third of the drop-outs, 36 per cent, said that their high school training did not help. They gave no reasons.

TABLE XVIII

HIGH SCHOOL HAD HELPED IN OBTAINING THE PRESENT JOB
OR IN PERFORMING IT SATISFACTORILY

ANSWER	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
Yes	36	23	59	56
No	23	15	38	36
No comment	1	7	8	8
TOTAL	60	45	105	100

It is apparent from the above discussion that only about one-quarter of the drop-outs attributed their success in their present jobs to any of the subjects they took in high school. The other quarter claimed that the education helped them generally. According to the drop-outs, there-

fore, those pupils who leave school before attaining a high school diploma are not educated sufficiently for the world of work. Their suggestions for changes in the curriculum are given in Chapter VII.

7. Summary

A very small number of drop-outs have attained the status of owners, managers or proprietors. Most of the drop-outs were employees. The majority of the boys were employed in primary industries, trades and labour groups, while the girls worked in offices, sales and personal service occupations. Although most of the drop-outs were in the low income groups, i.e. less than \$1,500.00 per annum, they were satisfied with their vocational choices.

They were, however, dissatisfied with their high school training and its relation to their present jobs. Approximately one-half of the drop-outs said that high school education did not assist them in attaining or performing their jobs. Of all the drop-outs only about one quarter regarded some high school subjects as useful in their work. It may, therefore, be concluded that the present high school curriculum is inadequate to meet the needs of the high school drop-outs.

CHAPTER VII

SUGGESTIONS BY DROP-OUTS TO CURRICULUM BUILDERS

This chapter is devoted mainly to changes in the schools suggested by the drop-outs. Among the topics discussed are the length of the school year, and the minimum age and education required of a pupil. Other important issues considered by the drop-outs were changes in the instructional procedures employed in the schools and modifications in the present policy of granting the high school diploma.

The drop-outs were asked to assume that they were just beginning high school now but with the knowledge they already possess, and were requested to specify the high school program they would follow. This question was designed to reveal the effect of their post-school experience on their attitudes toward school, and to reveal the type of counseling they are likely to give their brothers, sisters, and children.

1. Length of the School Year

The drop-outs were asked to discuss the length of the present school year and to recommend any necessary changes. Their arguments and recommendations were studied to ascertain if the present length of the school year is a factor

in dropping out.

TABLE XIX

RECOMMENDED LENGTH OF SCHOOL YEAR

LENGTH OF YEAR	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
6 months	0	1	1	1
7 months	1	0	1	1
8 months	2	4	6	6
9 months	19	8	27	26
10 months	36	31	67	64
11 months	0	1	1	1
12 months	2	0	2	2
TOTAL	60	45	105	101

From Table XIX it is apparent that almost two-thirds or 64 per cent of the drop-outs consider the school year should be of the present ten months' duration. About one-quarter of the drop-outs recommended a school year of nine months. The reasons they gave for their suggestions are given below:

- (1) The extra month could be used for harvesting.
- (2) A considerable amount of time is wasted in June.

Only 8 per cent of the drop-outs wanted a school year of less than nine months duration while another 3 per cent wanted it more than ten months long. Neither of these groups

gave reasons for their suggestions.

There were no pupils who related the length of the school year with their financial difficulties, i.e., the fact that a shorter school term would assist in earning more money. Since a majority of the drop-outs are satisfied with the length of the school year, it cannot be considered as an important factor in dropping out.

2. Minimum Age and Educational Requirements for Drop-outs

The present minimum requirements for drop-outs are Grade IX standing or attainment of fifteen years of age before the commencement of any school term. The drop-outs were asked to state what they thought the minimum requirements should be. Their results were tabulated in Table XX.

Sixty-eight per cent of the drop-outs suggested that the minimum requirements should be a Grade X education, or the attainment of sixteen years of age. The statements classified under "Other suggestions" are listed below:

- (a) At least Grade XI should be a minimum.
- (b) Pupils should remain at school until they have attained some vocational training which should be provided for those not academically inclined.¹

¹Vocational training authorized by the Department of Education in fields such as stenography and mechanics, for which some type of diploma would be given.

- (c) The pupil's family should assist in arriving at the decision to leave school.

TABLE XX

MINIMUM EDUCATIONAL OR AGE REQUIREMENTS
BEFORE PUPILS ARE PERMITTED TO LEAVE SCHOOL

REQUIREMENT	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
Completion of Grade VIII	6	2	8	8
Completion of Grade X	29	18	47	45
Completion of Grade XII	7	8	15	14
Sixteen years of age	14	10	24	23
Other suggestions	4	7	11	10
TOTAL	60	45	105	100

It is apparent that at least 82 per cent consider the present minimum educational requirements too low. According to the recommendations of the majority of the drop-outs new departmental regulations should require either a Grade X education or sixteen years of age as the minimum requirement before dropping out is permitted.

3. Changes in the Granting of the High School Diploma

The present high school diploma is granted after a pupil has successfully attained at least 100 high school credits of which:

- (a) 35 credits are in compulsory courses;

- (b) at least 50 credits are in Grade XI and Grade XII courses;
- (c) at least 14 credits are in Grade XII courses;
- (d) at least 10 credits are in Group B, C, or D electives.
- The drop-outs were asked if the granting of the diploma should be modified.

TABLE XXI

RECOMMENDED CHANGES IN THE
GRANTING OF A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

RECOMMENDATIONS	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
Less than 100 credits	2	3	5	5
The present 100 credits	48	33	81	77
More than 100 credits	3	4	7	7
Other recommendations	6	2	8	8
No statement	1	3	4	4
TOTAL	60	45	105	100

From Table XXI it is apparent that a large majority of the drop-outs, 77 per cent, deem the present number of 100 credits for a high school diploma as satisfactory.

Some of the other recommendations are listed below.

- (a) The awarding of the diploma should be dependent on the pupil's ability.
- (b) The program should be flexible, making it unnecessary to attend an additional year for three or four credits.

(c) A high school diploma should vary in content with the pupil's vocational choice.

Most of the drop-outs were satisfied with the present granting of the high school diploma after 100 high school credits. Others, however, recommended modifications to the present policy which future curriculum builders would do well to consider.

4. Training and Instruction in the High Schools

The drop-outs were asked to recommend changes in the kind of instruction offered in the high schools. Since no provision was made for more than one kind of change, each drop-out chose the one he or she considered most important. The results were tabulated in Table XXII..

From the table it may be observed that only 4 per cent of the drop-outs were satisfied with the present program. The largest single request, made by 36 per cent of the drop-outs, was for additional courses in fields like retail sales, mechanics, and the skilled trades. Another 20 per cent wanted some courses in planning one's future. The courses recommended included vocational guidance, courses in personality and in understanding oneself. Twelve per cent of the drop-outs wanted courses to prepare students as members of a family and as citizens. Courses requested here were home nursing, preparation for marriage, interior decorating,

TABLE XXII

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGES IN TRAINING
AND INSTRUCTION IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

RECOMMENDATIONS	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
Additional courses in selling mechanics, and skilled trades.	26	12	38	36
Courses for planning the pupils' future	13	8	21	20
Additional courses in agriculture and home economics	8	8	16	15
More diversified courses	5	9	14	13
Courses to prepare the student as a member of a family	6	6	12	12
No changes necessary	2	2	4	4
TOTAL	60	45	105	100

studies in sex, religion, citizenship, home building, and courses in family and opposite sex relationships. Fifteen per cent of the drop-outs wanted additional courses in agriculture and home economics.

It has again been made apparent that one of the reasons for pupils leaving school is the present lack of courses in which the pupils are interested. With the exception of a very small minority, all the drop-outs request a wider variety of courses. Most of the courses recommended are valuable to pupils in their post-school careers.

5. What Drop-outs Would Do Now if They Were Just Beginning Their High School Careers

The drop-outs were asked to state what they would do now, if they were just beginning high school and if they were as aware of their strengths and weaknesses as they are at present. They were requested to choose a course of action. Their choices are tabulated in Table XXIII.

TABLE XXIII

WHAT DROP-OUTS WOULD DO NOW
IF THEY WERE JUST BEGINNING HIGH SCHOOL

SUGGESTED PLANS	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
Enter the same high school	18	13	31	30
Take courses useful in university or college	14	6	20	19
Take mostly options like Shop, Home Economics, and Law	8	9	17	16
Enter a different high school	7	9	16	15
Not go to school at all	0	0	0	0
Enter some other type of school	13	8	21	20
TOTAL	60	45	105	100

It was noted that 30 per cent of the drop-outs said they would enter the same high school as before. Fifteen per cent would enter a different high school and another 19 per cent would take courses useful in university and college. Sixteen per cent of the drop-outs would take mostly options

such as shop, home economics, law, and psychology. Of the one-fifth, 20 per cent, of the drop-outs who would go to some other type of school:

- (a) 10 would go to a technical school;
- (b) 6 would go to a commercial school;
- (c) 3 would go to a composite school;
- (d) 2 would go to an agriculture school.

It should also be noted that not one person said he would not go to high school at all. This statement is in complete agreement with the drop-outs' contention that a high school education is both useful and valuable.²

From the above discussion it is apparent that even if they were beginning again, less than one-fifth of the drop-outs would take courses leading towards a university or college education. On the other hand, most of them wanted a general high school education, with a few preferring a program comprised mostly of options. The above discussion again indicates the necessity for a diversified program in the schools.

6. Summary

A majority of the drop-outs agreed that the present ten month school year is satisfactory. They recommended that the minimum requirements for school leaving be raised

²See Chapter V, Table XII.

to sixteen years or a Grade X standing instead of the present fifteen years or a Grade IX standing. That they see merits in staying in school as long as possible is again verified by the fact that if they were now just beginning high school they would all come back.

Now, however, with the experience they possess, the drop-outs would take courses that would qualify them more satisfactorily for their post-school careers. Only one-fifth of the drop-outs would take matriculation courses for university. The others would want courses in retail sales, mechanics, skilled trades, and vocational and social guidance. For these reasons the drop-outs request a wider variety of courses and more flexible requirements for the high school diploma.

CHAPTER VIII

ELEMENTS OF STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS IN THE PRESENT PROGRAM

This chapter is devoted to the comments made by drop-outs on the strengths and weaknesses of the present high school program. Its purpose was to discover where changes are necessary and what these changes should be. Although no suggestions were offered to indicate the topics to be discussed, the drop-outs expressed their opinions clearly.

A majority of the drop-outs listed some strengths of the program and many of its weaknesses. Their statements were categorized, and recorded under various headings. The number of drop-outs expressing themselves on each of the major topics were tabulated in Tables XXIV and XXV.

1. Elements of Strength in the Program

The strengths of the high school program, as expressed by the drop-outs, are recorded in the following paragraphs. Their statements were arranged in point form and in order of the frequency in which the topic was discussed. Where several similar statements were given, only one was recorded.

1. The Present Curriculum

(a) The curriculum is an excellent preparation for university or college.

(b) It gives a good foundation to the academically inclined.

TABLE XXIV

ELEMENTS OF STRENGTH IN THE PRESENT
HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

TOPIC DISCUSSED	NUMBER DISCUSSING TOPIC			
	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
The present curriculum	28	7	35	33
The large high school	7	7	14	13
The high school teachers	4	4	8	8
Extra-curricular activities	3	3	6	6
Compulsory attendance	2	0	2	2
Vocational guidance	2	0	2	2
Others	4	6	10	10

- (c) It is a good standard by which to single out those pupils who will have a chance in any highly skilled profession.
- (d) It offers a good general education.
- (e) The "one hundred credit" system is valuable since those who cannot attain matriculation standards can acquire a high school diploma.
- (f) Technical and commercial subjects, where available, are very valuable to some pupils.

2. The Large High Schools

- (a) Large high schools offer the pupils a wide variety of courses to choose from.

- (b) Most teachers in large high schools are specialists in their fields.

3. The High School Teachers

- (a) Some teachers endeavor to make their subjects interesting.
- (b) Some are efficient and well trained.
- (c) Some are friendly and are willing to help the pupils with their difficulties.

4. Extra-curricular Activities

- (a) Well planned activities break the monotony of the school day, making high school interesting.
- (b) The student councils are a step toward co-operative enterprise.

5. Attendance

- (a) Compulsory attendance is very important for the attainment of high school credits.

6. Vocational Guidance

- (a) Good career counselors, where they exist, are willing to assist pupils whenever and wherever they can.

7. Others

- (a) The present vanning system gives rural pupils the same chance to obtain an education as it does urban pupils.
- (b) Since Alberta standards are high, the attaining of the high school diploma is a real achievement.

- (c) Some high schools are efficiently conducted.
- (d) Generally, pupils like the high school atmosphere.

TABLE XXV

WEAKNESSES IN THE PRESENT HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

TOPIC DISCUSSED	NUMBER DISCUSSING TOPIC			
	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
The high school teachers	15	25	40	38
Suggested curriculum changes	15	14	29	28
Inadequacies of the curriculum	17	5	22	21
Vocational training	12	8	20	19
The small high school	6	4	10	10
Specialization in high school	4	2	6	6
Extra-curricular activities	3	2	5	5
Homework	1	4	5	5
Extra facilities in school	1	2	3	3
Enrolment in the school	2	1	3	3
Financial difficulties	1	0	1	1
Others	3	6	9	9

2. Weaknesses of the Program

The drop-outs were also requested to state the weaknesses in the high school program and to recommend improvements. The comments were grouped under major headings and

presented in order of the frequency in which they were listed.

1. The High School Teachers

- (a) Teacher training is poor. Many are rushed through one or two years of university and become teachers.
- (b) Teachers should take refresher courses, since some do not know their work well enough.
- (c) Some have the educational requirements but do not have the ability to transmit the information.
- (d) Some do not explain assignments clearly and reprimand pupils for resulting poor work.
- (e) Teachers do not encourage pupils to study.
- (f) They should give pupils more individual help.
- (g) They should not try to cover too much material in one class period. Instead they should take more time during classes to explain the new work.
- (h) Some do not care if homework is done.
- (i) Some teachers are sarcastic.
- (j) Some cannot control their tempers; others are comedians.
- (k) Some show favoritism toward the good students.
- (l) Some teachers purposefully give the pupil the impression that he will fail, in the hope that he will drop-out.
- (m) Some cannot hold class attention.
- (n) Teachers should be stronger disciplinarians and demand more respect.

- (o) They should try to develop pupil respect out of school by dressing and behaving properly in public.
- (p) They should be relieved of their position when they have to resort to meanness and sarcasm.

2. Suggested Curriculum Changes

- (a) Ancient history should be dropped and more emphasis placed on news and current affairs.
- (b) All pupils should be required to take some high school mathematics.
- (c) The English courses should be more practical with more emphasis on grammar and spelling.
- (d) Latin should be dropped.
- (e) There should be no compulsory subjects.

3. Inadequacies of the Present Curriculum

- (a) The present high school curriculum disregards pupils who want to be tradesmen, farmers, or technicians.
- (b) A wider variety of courses should be taught. Some of these should be in agriculture, carpentry, masonry, and similar trades.
- (c) More courses should be offered in the technical and commercial fields.
- (d) A basic course in sex education is a necessity.
- (e) More practical courses should be offered, including practical mathematics and English courses.

(f) The variety of optional courses should be extended.

4. Vocational Training

(a) More vocational training and guidance is necessary to help pupils make their plans for the future.

(b) Some qualified teacher should act as a consultant, advising pupils on the furtherance of their educational interests.

(c) Pupils should be given aptitude tests and advised accordingly.

(d) Pupils should be steered into correct channels, e.g., the matriculation, commercial, or technical fields.

(e) Pupils should be encouraged to choose a career while in high school, and should have a counselor to advise them in this.

(f) Teachers should help each pupil to plan and choose his courses wisely, and then encourage him as he proceeds with his school program.

(g) Teachers should be willing to discuss pupils' problems with them.

5. The Small High Schools

(a) The small high schools offer the pupils little variety in courses toward a high school diploma.

(b) They do not offer any facilities to those pupils who are not academically inclined.

- (c) Teachers in such schools have inferior knowledge and little experience. In addition, they have to teach too many subjects.
- (d) All small high schools should offer the same courses in order to facilitate the transfer of pupils from one such school to another.

6. Specialization

- (a) Not enough flexibility in the choice of courses is permitted.
- (b) Too much unnecessary material must be taken in order to graduate.
- (c) Pupils should be permitted to specialize in some fields.

7. Extra-curricular Activities

- (a) The schools should offer more extra-curricular activities.
- (b) Every school should have an auditorium.

8. Homework.

- (a) Too much homework is assigned in the high schools.

9. Extra facilities in the Schools

- (a) A large library is necessary in each school.
- (b) Some of the equipment required by commercial students is so expensive that individual pupils cannot afford it. It should, therefore, be supplied by the schools.

10. Enrolment in the School

- (a) The schools are overcrowded.
- (b) There are too many pupils per teacher. Unless more teachers become available, proper coverage of work will result only if class periods are lengthened and the school day extended from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

11. Financial Difficulties

- (a) Pupils who have to leave school because of financial difficulties should be assisted.

12. Others

- (a) Long van trips tire pupils unduly.
- (b) Dividing classes into hard and fast ability groups is very hard on the pupils.

3. Summary

The outstanding feature of the present high school curriculum, according to the drop-outs, is that it offers an excellent preparation for university or college. The drop-outs also appreciated the technical and commercial courses taught in the larger schools. These large schools had, in addition to the wide variety of subjects, teachers who were specialists in their fields. The drop-outs also admired and appreciated the efficient, well-trained teachers, and all those who tried to help them with their difficulties.

The weaknesses in the high school program included primarily the teachers who were insufficiently trained, sarcastic or prejudiced. Some of these assigned homework but did not check it, nor did they offer individual help.

About 20 per cent of the drop-outs recommended, as a necessary alteration, the dropping of ancient history and the substitution of more contemporary affairs. Other recommendations of note were more practical courses in English, mathematics, and at least one basic course in sex education.

The drop-outs stated that the present curriculum disregarded those pupils who wanted to become tradesmen, farmers, or technicians. Therefore, they requested courses in agriculture, construction, and more courses in technical and commercial electives.

Many of the drop-outs suggested that the high schools should offer more vocational training courses. They recommended that qualified teachers be employed to give interest and aptitude tests, advise the pupils of their capabilities, and then help them plan their futures by steering them into the correct vocational channels.

The number and diversity of the weaknesses suggest that many improvements must be made before the rate of dropping out can be expected to decline.

CHAPTER IX

PERSONAL INTERVIEWS WITH DROP-OUTS

The purpose of this study of ten boys and ten girls was to gather a deeper insight into the high school experiences of drop-outs. Although the interviews were structured, each drop-out was permitted to discuss any desired topic at length. The drop-outs criticized the present system of education and recommended changes which would benefit a large percentage of the student body. The discussions extended into various fields of educational endeavour and are summarized under the topics which follow. As in the preceding chapter, when several similar statements were given, only one was recorded.

1. Values of a High School Education

All of the drop-outs interviewed agreed that a high school education was useful and valuable. Some of the reasons they gave are listed below.

- (a) High school is generally valuable in teaching accuracy, arrangement, neatness, and in attaining speed in calculation.
- (b) Mathematical training helps one obtain and hold a good job. It also helps in calculating business deals.
- (c) A high school education gives pupils a better under-

standing of jobs and people.

- (d) If the educational level of the country is to increase, Grade X standing and sixteen years of age should be made the minimum requirements for leaving school.

2. Colleges

Most of the interviewees were in favor of colleges. Several would have considered going to a college had there been one in the vicinity. Local colleges, they said, would be a stimulus to work. If the colleges were available, without incurring any additional expenses to the pupils and their parents, the standard of education would go up.

As other incentives to work some drop-outs suggested that there should be a counselor at each school to direct the pupils into the proper channels. Some others suggested that the colleges should offer scholarships.

The drop-outs recommended that the entrance requirements to the colleges or other institutions of advanced training should be a junior matriculation or seventy credits. These institutions should offer a diversified curriculum where one could study agriculture, mechanics, and other skilled trades. On graduation each pupil should receive a college or institute certificate to assist him in qualifying for a job.

3. Elements of Strength in the Present High School

The interviewees were requested to indicate the elements of strength in the present program. First of all, they were of the opinion that the program is an excellent preparation for college or university. Second, they approved of the varied curriculum offered by the larger high schools since it seemed to meet the needs of non-academic as well as of the more academic pupils. Third, they felt that the students' union offers good training for those who are prepared to take advantage of the opportunities which it provides. In addition some of the drop-outs expressed their appreciation of the more recently introduced technical and commercial subjects.

4. Weaknesses of the Present High School Program

The chief weakness appears to be the limited curriculum. Pupils are not permitted to specialize in high school. Because of a lack of electives they have to take academic sciences and mathematics instead of the technical and commercial courses they desire. Even when it is possible to take commercial courses, pupils are not permitted to take more than three such courses in any one year.

Some of the drop-outs consulted saw little purpose in retaining courses like Latin and ancient history. On the other hand they felt the lack of debating, and speech and

voice training. Pupils also want more courses to assist them in planning their future occupations.

The homework must also be done out of school since lectures seem to take up all the class periods.

Pupils in their adolescence like to be independent. They should be given more opportunities to be leaders, as well as followers. High school pupils should be taught to accept responsibility.

5. Courses

A large number of interviewees thought that ancient history was of little or no value to technical or commercial students. It was conceded that the course may be useful and necessary to those who choose to go to university. However, it was felt that planning their future would be of greater importance to the pupils. They wanted, therefore, more courses in vocational training, and more guidance and counsel. A further recommendation was to divide the vocational training into two classes, by sexes, in order that the narrower fields would be more thoroughly covered.

Some of the other courses recommended were in commercial, technical and agricultural fields, in retail sales, mechanics and in other skilled trades. The courses, they said, should not be too extensive, should be practical, and should be considered by employers when a pupil applies for

a job. If the latter is not the case, pupils lose valuable time and money in repeating the courses for credit in technical schools.

Some of the drop-outs recommended also that there should be a large variety of courses, a freedom of choice, and no compulsory subjects.

6. Counseling

All the drop-outs interviewed were emphatic in their demand for more, and better qualified counselors. It was the general opinion that most pupils would use a counselor if they had one to go to. The reasons they gave for having a counselor present in the schools are given below.

- (1) A counselor would be very useful in advising the pupils on their choice of a high school program. With his help pupils would take courses they like, and would not lose interest and leave school.
- (2) A counselor would be available to discuss pupil difficulties in any course. Pupils who air their difficulties are not likely to quit school as readily. They would see the counselor before making any major decisions.
- (3) The counselor would assist the pupils in arranging their courses in keeping with their interests and aptitudes.
- (4) The counselor would discuss the courses and timetables of universities and colleges, the available occupational

or professional fields, the year's activities, and other pertinent information. Without a counselor's help students enter the schools of higher learning with little or no idea of the available fields, courses, or the type of work expected of them.

Drop outs were also asked to suggest means of improving the counseling of pupils. Their suggestions are listed below.

- (1) The counselor should be an understanding teacher who can use his full time to talk to pupils about their problems and then help the pupils solve them. Such a counseling technique would, in itself, cause many pupils to finish high school.
- (2) The work of a counselor should be widely publicized in the school. At present most pupils don't know what he is trying to do.
- (3) He should be accessible to all pupils.
- (4) More pupils would go to see the counselor if they felt that he was genuinely trying to help them. The counselor's effectiveness would increase as he became better acquainted with the pupils and gained their confidence.
- (5) Counseling should be explained to pupils in detail.
- (6) Pupils should be made to realize that high school is the most important time in their lives since it is then that they mold their futures. Anyone who looks ahead will not

be wasting time later in life. Pupils should also be made to realize how valuable education is and what its effects are on one's happiness and future success.

- (7) A counselor should have free periods during the day so that all the pupils could come to see him at least a few times a year.
- (8) To be effective a counselor must have more power and jurisdiction in the school.
- (9) He should have some training in counseling and vocational guidance.
- (10) He should teach a vocations and guidance course to assist individual pupils in planning their courses.
- (11) He should find opportunities for pupils to work part time in vocations of their choice in order that they might determine their liking and aptitude for them.

7. Teachers

More than one-half, 55 per cent, of the interviewees, gave poor teachers as one of their three reasons for leaving school. It may, therefore, be expected that the teachers would come under considerable criticism. The comments on the teachers are listed below.

- (1) Teachers are individuals trying to get a job done as best they can. Some try to help the pupils to pass with the best possible marks.
- (2) When a teacher likes a subject, he makes it interesting,

and consequently more easily assimilated by pupils.

- (3) Some teachers try to assist pupils any way they can.
- (4) The pupils like teachers who respect their views and attitudes and who admit mistakes when they occur.

The reasons why drop-outs disliked some teachers are given below in order of frequency.

- (1) Some teachers lack enthusiasm and interest in the courses they teach.
- (2) Certain teachers are sarcastic. Some of these pick on particular pupils day after day. Pupils get the idea that the teacher has it in for them, become discouraged, and leave school when it is obvious they will not pass.
- (3) Teachers work only with the pupils who apply themselves; the others are permitted to fall by the wayside.
- (4) Some of the teachers give the impression that their word is law and their statements above reproach. Thus they prejudice the student against the teacher and the subjects taught.
- (5) Some give too much homework. Pupils have to choose between doing the homework in one course or work on all the others. Later, because of the large amount of unfinished work, they don't try to catch up but lose interest in the course and drop it or quit school.
- (6) Some teachers favor and give more assistance to the pupils who do good work than to those who don't work

and need more help.

- (7) Some teachers set a bad example in and out of school.
- (8) Students are constantly taught to respect the teachers. Reciprocally pupils should also rate individual respect and patience.
- (9) High School teachers should be stronger disciplinarians. Study periods, as a rule, were very poorly supervised.
- (10) Pupils should be made to feel they are doing the work for themselves.

8. Pupils

After the discussions on teachers, the drop-outs were asked if any of the pupils created any problems while at school. The resulting statements are listed below.

- (1) Some pupils did not show the proper attitude toward the teachers. They tried to do as they pleased and caused many minor restrictions to be placed on all pupils' actions around the school. If these pupils did anything wrong they would not admit it, thereby causing others to get into trouble.
- (2) Some pupils carried on in such a manner as to disturb classes and annoy other pupils until the latter also lost interest in classes and disliked school. High schools should, therefore, insist on more positive discipline.

- (3) Some pupils did not like to take compulsory subjects even if they were valuable. They became discouraged and worked only for partial credits. Others worked in compulsory subjects only to get a high school diploma.
- (4) Pupils must be given more incentive to work. This may be accomplished by permitting the pupils to specialize in high schools. If they like a subject they will learn it. Pupils always try hardest in their best subjects. They also put forth more effort if they like the teacher who teaches the subject.
- (5) Pupils like the sportsminded teachers. They also respect those teachers who respect the pupils' views and attitudes.
- (6) Pupils dislike teachers who use sarcasm, those who assign a large amount of homework, and those who are easily distracted and led off the subject.

9. Work Habits

The drop-outs were asked to describe their work habits while at school and to give reasons for the type of work done. Their answers were categorized into five major divisions and are listed below from best to worst.

- (1) Three drop-outs had good study habits. They tried hard and always had their homework done.
- (2) Four of the interviewees liked to study but could have

done more. One of these preferred to work at school rather than at home.

- (3) Three said that their study habits were not very good. One said he lacked incentive as he had no opportunity to get a wider conception of the competition in the working world.
- (4) Three tried but did not know how to study. These recommended that the pupils be taught how to study in high school and that the lesson should be repeated frequently.
- (5) Seven drop-outs had poor study habits. One remarked that the teachers said her study habits were poor but did not recommend any better ones. Others had poor study habits because they didn't think it mattered. One said that study periods were rest periods since they were improperly supervised. Finally, one pupil remarked that some pupils with high ability didn't work and set a poor example which caused the class attitude to deteriorate.

10. Facilities

According to the drop-outs the facilities of the high schools were inadequate and overtaxed. They considered libraries incomplete and shops poorly equipped. In addition, they strongly recommended small classes in shop courses to permit close supervision and individual attention. They

insisted on strict discipline in the technical courses since pupils could easily be hurt if not carefully watched.

Some drop-outs suggested that the school grounds should be kept tidy and trim. Another suggested that the teachers be required to take an interest in extra-curricular activities.

11. Graduation From School

As a rule, drop-outs agreed that high school graduation should be the goal of most pupils. Graduation should not be permitted in any fewer than the three years necessary now. A pupil should feel that it is to his advantage to profit from his high school experience. He should accumulate a large amount of knowledge before graduation. If the high school program were accelerated only the most capable students would graduate; the others would get frustrated and drop out. It was suggested that a pupil should mature in high school and the three years necessary now are a brief enough period of time.

On the other hand, the drop-outs suggested that no pupil should be expected to go to high school for more than four years. The interviewees suggested that different patterns should require a different number of credits for graduation. The examples recommended that a matriculation diploma may require 100 credits, whereas a commercial or

salesmanship diploma may require only 85 credits.

TABLE XXVI

REASONS FOR GOING TO HIGH SCHOOL

REASONS GIVEN	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
High school trained me for a job	10	6	16	80
I liked to go to school	6	5	11	55
I wanted to take part in sports	5	2	7	35
I wanted to acquire a good general education	4	1	5	25
High school education is needed for most good jobs	4	1	5	25
Most of my friends went to high school	3	1	4	20
My parents insisted that I go to school	1	2	3	15
I liked some of the high school courses	1	1	2	10
I wanted to meet new friends	2	0	2	10
It was the natural thing to do after Grade IX	1	1	2	10

12. Reasons for going to High School

The interviewees were asked to give their reasons for going to school as long as they did.

The results classified under the various headings com-

pare favorably with the results found in the questionnaire study.¹ It does appear that the necessity of a high school education for a job stands out most clearly in the minds of most of the drop-outs. The classification of their reasons is summarized in Table XXVI.

13. Reasons for Leaving High School

The reasons for leaving school were categorized as were the reasons for going.

The results of this study, also, compare favorably with those of the questionnaire study.² The summary of the reasons for leaving is given in Table XXVII.

Most interviewees left to take, or look for, a job. However, more than one-half, 55 per cent, of the drop-outs left because of poor teachers. They stated that the chief faults of teachers were the excessive use of sarcasm and the large number of petty rules they formulated and haphazardly enforced.

14. Long Range Plans

When asked what they, the drop-outs, would do now, if they were only beginning high school, most of them said that they would go to a large school and specialize. Some said

¹Chapter IV, Table IX. p.32.

²Chapter IV, Table X. pp.37-38.

TABLE XXVII

REASONS FOR LEAVING HIGH SCHOOL

REASONS GIVEN	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	PERCENT
To take or look for a job	9	3	12	60
Poor teachers	6	5	11	55
Not getting courses wanted	6	2	8	40
Courses unrelated to vocational plans	5	2	7	35
Failed some courses	4	3	7	35
Financial difficulties	2	3	5	25
No further interest in school	3	1	4	20
Friends left school	1	1	2	10
Thought practical experience more important than theory	1	1	2	10
Plans for marriage	1	0	1	5
Went to technical school	1	0	1	5
Weak student activity program	1	0	1	5
Did not consider the future	1	0	1	5

they would plan for a technical or a college course after graduation.

When asked about their future plans now, the boys gave reasonable and well thought out long range plans. All the boys are gainfully employed, and either have a good chance for advancement or are already owners or part owners of

businesses. All the girls planned to work for a while, then get married.

15. The Questionnaire

Although most of the interviewed drop-outs were also included in the original sample to whom the questionnaires were sent, only a few of the latter were returned. During the interviews they were all asked to give reasons why drop-outs would or would not answer the questionnaires.

The purpose of this questioning was to gain an insight into the reluctance on the part of a majority of the original drop-out sample to answer the questionnaire, and to record the reasons in order to prevent similar errors from being made in subsequent studies. The examiner also wanted an expression of opinion from the drop-outs who did answer the questionnaires.

Some of the reasons given for not answering the questionnaires are listed below.

- (1) Some drop-outs felt that a few of the questions were too personal and were not sure that the answers would be kept confidential.
- (2) Some may have been introverts, and did not care to discuss their ideas or express their opinions.
- (3) Others may have been antagonistic toward the school, and would have nothing to do with the school or teachers.

- (4) Some may have been too busy.

Those who did answer the questionnaires took a very constructive attitude toward the study. Their reasons are listed below.

- (1) Some of the drop-outs realized that they did not get much out of the present school curriculum. They thought that their comments might be considered by curriculum builders and thereby improve the school plant for others.
- (2) Several drop-outs remarked that if too many let the investigator down, no one would know the reactions of the drop-outs to their school curriculum and no modifications to the program would follow. However, if many did answer, and their comments and suggestions were brought to light, then perhaps something would be done about it.
- (3) Some thought that if more drop-outs answered the questionnaires and were concerned about the wide rift between teachers and pupils, the haphazard way in which pupils choose their courses, and the lack of available vocational information, then more counselors would be employed. The pupils, then, would each have direct contact with a teacher qualified to give vocational guidance and counsel, and the result would be fewer drop-outs among high school students.
- (4) Other drop-outs said it looked like a worthwhile project and could see no harm in assisting in the research.

- (5) A few said they wanted to help iron out some of the present school difficulties.
- (6) One drop-out commented that if the investigator went to the trouble of sending the questionnaire to find out what her high school difficulties were, she thought that she should do her part and answer it.
- (7) Most of the interviewees stated that they wanted to help more pupils to attain their goals. This, they said, would be possible if some of their recommended changes were heeded and put into practice.

6. Summary

The drop-outs interviewed were very cooperative and expressed themselves freely and fully. They thought that high school education was both useful and valuable, and said that if they had the chance now, they would each try to obtain a high school diploma. At this point they stressed again that the present curriculum, being highly academic, did not meet the needs of the majority, as only a small percentage of pupils wanted to go to a university or college. Drop-outs also commented that discipline was lacking in the high schools, and that there was little incentive on the part of pupils to accept responsibility.

They recommended more and better qualified counselors to help pupils when difficulties arise, especially when they

must plan or choose their courses or before they make other major decisions. Counseling, they said, could be improved by using understanding teachers who could gain the confidence of pupils. Vocational guidance and counsel should be more widely publicized. Pupils should be made to realize that the high school age is the one in which they mold their futures.

Teachers were considered by most drop-outs as individuals who were trying to do a job as well as they could. Teachers who liked their subjects made them interesting, explained their work carefully, and helped pupils in every way they could. Drop-outs disliked teachers who lacked enthusiasm, interest, and did not know their courses well enough. They disliked especially those who used sarcasm and those who showed partiality.

They also disliked those whose word was always above reproach. In addition, drop-outs also disliked the pupils who annoyed other pupils during classes, those who did not work, and those who necessitated the making of many minor rules.

Drop-outs were very concerned about the large number of pupils who did not know how to study and were never taught how to do so. They recommended that teachers should teach and often reteach study methods for various courses.

Most of the interviewees commented that the present

facilities of the schools were inadequate, and that the schools, themselves, were overcrowded. They said that the technical and commercial courses were offered to large classes where individual attention was almost impossible and discipline could not be maintained.

The drop-outs thought that the 100 credit regulation was a good one but suggested that it be relaxed slightly for the non-academic students. In order that a pupil may mature sufficiently to take his place in the world, they believe that three years of high school training are desirable.

Drop-outs said they went to school because it trained them for a job or because they liked to go. They left to take or look for a job, when they could not get along with the teachers, were not getting the courses they wanted, or found that their courses were unrelated to their vocational plans. They now have well-planned vocational goals toward which they are carefully working.

Some of the drop-outs did not complete the questionnaires because they were not sure that their answers would be kept confidential. Others were too busy, or did not care to discuss their opinions. Those who did answer did so in the hope that their recommendations might be considered and put into practice. They suggested that more qualified counselors be employed in vocational guidance to correlate pupils' courses with their vocational plans, and that the present curriculum be modified to hold the interest of more

pupils until they graduate with a high school diploma.

CHAPTER X

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study of Grade XI and Grade XII drop-outs was carried out in Southern Alberta between the years 1947 and 1951. About one-fifth of all the drop-outs answered the questionnaire which was sent to them. The findings and recommendations given hereinafter are based on the attitudes of these drop-outs towards their teachers, the curriculum, the guidance received at school, the schools, whether large or small, and further education.

The drop-outs who did answer the questionnaire did so with the intention of assisting in the removal of some of the present school difficulties. They earnestly offered recommendations trusting that some of these would be put into practice to aid future high school pupils in gaining a more satisfactory education.

From the questionnaire it was found that the drop-outs were employed in many occupations. These were classified to offer an analysis of the occupations of drop-outs. The boys were employed mainly as farmers, miners, or laborers; the girls as office workers, or sales ladies. The boys' average weekly wage was \$29.41, while the girls' wage was \$17.92.

Very few drop-outs, 11 per cent, left school to own or

manage a place of business. The others left for scholastic, economic, or personal reasons. Although most of the drop-outs were fairly well satisfied in their occupations, about 57 per cent of the boys were still looking for opportunities to obtain better jobs.

1. Values of a High School Education

The four main reasons given by drop-outs for attending school as long as they did, were that high school trained them for jobs, they liked to go, it was the natural thing to do after Grade IX, and their parents insisted that they go. While at school they participated in athletics, music, dramatics and other extra-curricular activities.

The drop-outs stated that the schools trained them to meet people easily, to undertake and do new tasks, and gave them a broader outlook on life. They added that high school taught them accuracy, neatness, and organization of work, and speed in calculation. It also gave them a better understanding of jobs and people. Most of the drop-outs went to school primarily because an education is necessary before one can secure a good job. They said that employers considered an applicant's education before hiring him.

Drop-outs left school to look for jobs when they were not getting the courses they wanted, were attaining poor grades in their subjects, or were taking courses which were

unrelated to their vocational plans. Three-quarters of the drop-outs changed their vocational plans while in high school. The changes were all from matriculation courses to technical or commercial courses. In these fields there was a shortage of courses; therefore they left school. More than one-third of the entire sample considered the training they received in high school inadequate to meet the demands of their present vocations.

The drop-outs also stated that high school does not offer enough training in supervision or in directing the activities of others, and does not lay enough stress on participation in civic affairs. It may be concluded that the present curriculum is inadequate to meet the needs of the pupils who leave school to go into the world of work.

Recommendations

1. Foster the pupils' ideas that high school has a good atmosphere, that education is worth while, and that the pupil should always strive to better himself.
2. The minimum drop-out requirements should be a Grade X education or sixteen years of age.
3. High school pupils should be frequently reminded that there are more occupational opportunities for pupils who graduate with a high school diploma.
4. Since, on leaving school, a pupil usually leaves the dependency of the home, his education should include a

preparation for the working world. The high school program should be such that a pupil can receive some training for the vocation in which he is interested.

5. Since industries and trades accept most of the school population, the schools should prepare their students more effectively for these occupations.
6. High school education should prepare a student for everyday living.

2. Teachers

Almost one-third of the drop-outs placed some responsibility for their leaving school on the teachers. The drop-outs did appreciate the efficient, well-trained teachers who were friendly and helpful. They also respected those who tried to make their teaching effective by making their subjects interesting and by explaining their courses fully. The drop-outs, however, did not like the poorly trained teachers, those who lacked enthusiasm in teaching, and those who showed little interest in their courses. Furthermore, they did not like those who were sarcastic, poor disciplinarians, and those who gave too much homework.

Drop-outs also complained about their own poor study habits. Less than half worked or liked to work. Many did not know how to study and were never taught to do so.

Recommendations

1. Pupils should be taught, and frequently retaught, how to study.
2. More effective disciplinary methods are necessary.
3. All pupils need to experience success and recognition for the work they do, if they are to develop a liking for school.
4. Teachers should believe in the integrity and importance of each pupil.
5. Longer periods of training and better methods of selecting teachers are necessary to improve the efficiency of the teaching profession.

3. The Curriculum

It has frequently been said that the present curriculum is an excellent preparation for university or college, yet only 20 per cent of the pupils who graduate want to go on to higher learning institutions. The others want to go to work. The academic curriculum under which these students were trained did not, apparently, meet the needs of the majority of the pupils. It is this lack of practical courses that causes many pupils, who might otherwise have remained in high school, to drop out. The drop-outs chose mathematics, physics, social studies, industrial arts, and commercial subjects as the favorite courses in the present curriculum.

Recommendations

1. A revision of the curriculum is necessary to provide a more diverse program in the high school where the ability and aptitude of the pupils have become increasingly varied. Only when these are the bases of the curriculum can the interests of pupils be maintained.
2. After a minimum of general education in high school, pupils should be permitted to specialize so that a high school education may lead either to employment or to further study.
3. Schools should offer courses incorporating local interests.
4. Some type of mathematics should be required of all high school students.
5. English courses should be more practical. They should include more grammar, spelling, and remedial reading.
6. More emphasis should be placed on news and current affairs and less on ancient history.
7. A good course in sex education should be offered.
8. Courses should be offered for citizenship training and should include such topics as civics, debating, political study, and family living.
9. Several courses in vocational guidance should be included in the high school curriculum.
10. Extra-curricular activities are necessary for the wholesome development of pupils and should be a part of the

high school program.

11. Schools should recognize the worth of all types of courses. The academic course should not be considered more important than the specialized education for business or the trades.
12. Additional courses are required in retail sales, mechanics, skilled trades, agriculture, and home economics.
13. General exploratory courses should precede and be prerequisite to the specialized ones. Such a procedure would offer pupils more opportunity to decide on the area of specialization.
14. High schools should arrange opportunities for those pupils who want to work part time.
15. A semester plan would help farm pupils.

4. The Large and Small High Schools

The large high schools offer a wider variety of courses than do the smaller ones. In the latter, the individual teacher must teach too many subjects and usually has less experience than do the teachers in larger centres. The vaning of students to larger high schools overcomes these difficulties to some extent. It also gives both the rural and urban pupils the same educational opportunities and the same wide vocational choice. It does, however, create other

serious problems. The vanning of pupils and the recent increase in the high school population have caused the schools to become overcrowded and made the facilities inadequate and overtaxed.

Recommendations

1. Pupils should be vanned to larger centres to increase the variety of courses from which they may choose.
2. These larger centralized schools should be equipped with adequate facilities and specialized teachers.
3. Expensive equipment should not be expected of individual pupils. Adequate equipment should be provided by the schools.
4. The costs to pupils should be minimized, and needy pupils should be assisted to secure part time employment.

5. Guidance

The home and the community are doing a good job of helping the pupils to plan their futures. The assistance they can give, however, is limited and often insufficient to meet the needs of the pupils. The schools must also offer some vocational advice. This assistance has been badly neglected. Many of the drop-outs, having received little or no guidance, left school with the idea that they could receive the necessary vocational information by practical experience.

The main reason for this inadequacy of counseling is the lack of qualified personnel to do the required guidance work. In addition, there are very few supervisors employed at the divisional level who can assist pupils and teachers in this field. Guidance must be improved from its present passive state to a real, active program within the schools. The dividends of the well-trained, hard working counselors will be larger numbers of pupils better adjusted to the world of work.

Recommendations

1. A counselor must have the time and place to give adequate counseling service. He must have administrative support, staff cooperation, and community understanding.
2. A counselor must be specially trained to give tests of aptitude, interest, and ability, and to use the information so derived in counseling situations.
3. He must be able to provide educational assistance and vocational information to pupils who require or request it.
4. A counselor should correlate pupil's courses with their vocational plans. Then he should assist and coordinate all the efforts of every pupil as they progress through school.
5. A counselor must treat all interviewees as conversational equals. Counseling should be voluntary and values must

be confidentially disregarded to assist in self-perception.

6. Counselors should be teachers of vocational guidance courses.
7. Counseling should include finding part time employment for pupils in their chosen vocation. It should also include job placement on graduation.
8. A counselor should arrange career nights and visits to industries.
9. He should assist with in-service training of the school staff.
10. Guidance supervisors at the divisional level are necessary to assist teachers with in-service training and with testing programs when the teachers lack the necessary qualifications.
11. Guidance and counseling should be widely publicized in the school and community.
12. Authority and permissiveness are incompatible and must stand apart. The administrator is not usually the best counselor, nor the counselor the best administrator.

6. Further Training

The boys who dropped out are presently planning to become owners or managers of businesses, while the girls are planning to work and eventually to marry. All concluded

that their goals were satisfactory to them. The majority stated, however, that they would have worked harder and continued in school had they had a local college to attend on graduation.

Recommendations

1. More colleges or institutes offering diversified vocational training should be established at or near the larger high school centres. These colleges would offer the non-academic students an opportunity to continue their education and training beyond the high school level.
2. Such colleges should offer scholarships or grants to those who wish to go on but who cannot do so on their own resources.
3. The colleges could offer night classes for those who had to work during the day.
4. College entrance requirements should be at least seventy high school credits.

7. Conclusion

Educational theories are constantly being modified and altered to meet the changing demands of industry, labor, and institutions for further training. The curriculum must also be revised, and the school facilities improved and extended. These necessary changes, however, are hampered by difficulties in curriculum building and by insufficient financial

assistance to education. In the meantime the unsuitable curriculum and the inadequate facilities in the schools continue to cause pupils to drop out of school with insufficient training or experience to be readily effective in the world of work or in society generally.

Recommendations

1. More money should be allotted to education.
2. Increased retention of pupils could be attained by widening the curriculum and improving school facilities.
3. Pupils should be guided into those programs which are suited to their abilities, aptitudes, and interests, by teachers specially trained in testing and counseling techniques.
4. The schools should endeavour to make the pupils realize that employment and advancement in the world of work are very limited for those who have not attained a high school diploma.

Recommendations to Future Investigators

Some valuable information could be obtained in future studies of this nature if the following suggestions were considered.

1. Compare the intelligence quotients of the Grade XII drop-outs with those of graduates.
2. Compare the number of drop-outs who change their vocational

plans in high school with the number of graduates who do not do so.

3. Compare the rate of dropping out from academic and composite schools.
4. Compare the findings in another area of Alberta with the findings in Southern Alberta.

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APPENDIX

Taber, Alberta,
March 1, 1951.

Dear

I prepared this questionnaire for the purpose of gathering information about the educational and work experiences of the students who discontinued school during Gr. XI or Gr. XII in the last few years. I am interested in finding out why so many Southern Alberta students stopped school in these two grades.

Please consider each question carefully and answer it as well as you can. A few facts of a rather personal nature have been included in order that I may be better able to appraise the education you received under the present Alberta High School system.

Answers will be treated confidentially, so do not hesitate to state your ideas freely. If you wish to make additional comments in the margins, such comments will receive careful consideration.

Use the self-addressed envelope to return the answered questionnaire. Please be as prompt as you can.

Thank you very sincerely for your co-operation.

Yours very truly,

(signed) Metro Gushaty

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name _____ Sex _____
Surname Given names
2. What is your present address? _____
Street City Province
3. (a) What High School(s) did you attend? _____
(b) What grade did you last attend? _____
4. When were you born? Day _____ Month _____ Year _____
5. Encircle your marital status: single, married, divorced, widowed, separated.
6. In what province or country were your parents born?
Father _____ Mother _____
7. Check the highest level of schooling attained by each of your parents:
Father Mother
____ (a) Did not attend school
____ (b) Public School
____ (c) Some High School
____ (d) Graduated from High School
____ (e) Some College work
____ (f) University Degree
8. What were your parents' occupations when you started High School?
Father _____ Mother _____
9. How far was your home from the High School you attended?
_____ miles.
10. What type of job or vocational plan did you have at the beginning and the end of your High School career?
Beginning _____
End _____
11. Check (✓) those extracurricular fields in which you were active during your High School career. Place an (X) before those that you now think would have been useful to you whether you took part in them or not:
____ (a) Athletics _____ (c) Debating and speech
____ (b) Musical _____ (d) Politics

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| _____ (e) Religion | _____ (h) Art |
| _____ (f) Journalism (School paper) | _____ (i) Hobby group |
| _____ (g) Dramatics | _____ (j) Student |
| _____ (k) Others. | Government |
| State _____ | |
-

12. What were your favorite subjects at school? _____

13. Mark the three most important reasons in order of importance (1, 2, 3) which were responsible for your leaving High School:

- _____ (a) Left to take or look for a job.
 - _____ (b) Were not getting what you wanted.
 - _____ (c) Were needed at home.
 - _____ (d) Were securing low grading in courses. The courses were _____
 - _____ (e) Moved to where a High School was not available.
 - _____ (f) Courses were unrelated to vocational plans.
 - _____ (g) Financial difficulties.
 - _____ (h) Parents not interested in your further training.
 - _____ (i) Weak student activity program at school.
 - _____ (j) Marriage or plans for marriage.
 - _____ (k) Illness.
 - _____ (l) Went to a technical or business school.
 - _____ (m) Failed some subjects in school. How many? _____
 - _____ (n) Brother or sister in High School, both could not go.
 - _____ (o) Could not dress as well as others.
 - _____ (p) Friends did not go to High School.
 - _____ (q) Poor teacher(s).
 - _____ (r) Other reasons. _____
-

14. Check (✓) the three most important reasons why you attended High School as far as you did go:

- _____ (a) It trained you for a job.
- _____ (b) It prepared you for marriage.
- _____ (c) Your parents insisted that you go to school.
- _____ (d) You liked to study.
- _____ (e) The laws required that you go to school.
- _____ (f) Most of your friends went to High School.
- _____ (g) You wanted to meet new friends.
- _____ (h) You wanted to take part in sports; softball, hockey, etc.
- _____ (i) Some of the people you admire most have a High School education.

- ____ (j) You liked to go to school.
____ (k) It was the natural thing to do after completing
Gr. IX.
____ (l) Any other reasons. _____
-

15. To what extent did you obtain satisfactory training or experience in each of the following while in High School?

Encircle the code letter that indicates your attitude towards every situation referred to below:

- S -- Highly satisfied (very pleased)
A -- About average (moderately satisfied)
U -- Unsatisfied (disappointed)

- | | |
|--|-------|
| (a) Information and advice on further education | S A U |
| (b) Guidance and counsel on the selection of a
job for you. | S A U |
| (c) Training for active participation in civic,
community life. | S A U |
| (d) Training for the vocation you are now in. | S A U |
| (e) Preparation for home and family living. | S A U |
| (f) Developed your ability to meet people
easily. | S A U |
| (g) Improved your ability to undertake and do
new tasks. | S A U |
| (h) Training in supervising and directing the
activities of others. | S A U |
| (i) Training in writing and speaking
effectively. | S A U |
| (j) Training for effective use of leisure time. | S A U |
| (k) Gave you a broader outlook on life. | S A U |
| (l) Developed a sound philosophy of life. | S A U |

16. Indicate your attitude towards the help given by each of the following in planning your future while you were in High School.

Use the same code as in No. 15 above.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| (a) A member of the school staff. | S A U |
| (b) Your parent(s) | S A U |
| (c) Your brother or sister. | S A U |
| (d) Your friend. | S A U |
| (e) Your Superintendent of Schools. | S A U |
| (f) Your High School Inspector. | S A U |
| (g) A High School Counselor. | S A U |
| (h) A Vocations and Guidance course. | S A U |
| (i) Books you read in High School. | S A U |

17. In your opinion how valuable and useful did your parents consider High School education to be: Check (✓) one.
- _____ (a) Very useful and valuable.
 - _____ (b) Useful and valuable.
 - _____ (c) Has no particular use of value.
 - _____ (d) Has certain disadvantages.
 - _____ (e) Is a distinct waste of time and money.
18. How valuable do you consider High School education to be: Check (✓) one.
- _____ (a) Very useful and valuable.
 - _____ (b) Useful and valuable.
 - _____ (c) Has no particular use or value.
 - _____ (d) Has certain disadvantages.
 - _____ (e) Is a distinct waste of time and money.
19. (a) Encircle the number of jobs you have held for periods of one month or more since leaving school.
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10.
If more, state how many. _____
- (b) What is your present job or occupation? _____
- (c) Do you own all or part of your business, farm, or place of employment? Check (✓) one:
- _____ (a) Own and manage place of employment.
 - _____ (b) Manage place of employment for others.
 - _____ (c) Own part of business, farm, etc.
 - _____ (d) Work for someone else.
 - _____ (e) Other arrangements. (Please state) _____
-
- (d) What was your total yearly earned income (before income tax deductions) from your job(s) last year? Check (✓) one.
- _____ (a) Less than \$1000.
 - _____ (b) \$1000, less than \$1500.
 - _____ (c) \$1500, less than \$2000.
 - _____ (d) \$2000, less than \$3000.
 - _____ (e) Over \$3000.
- (e) How well pleased are you with your present job?
- _____ (a) Thoroughly satisfied. Would not change jobs.
 - _____ (b) Satisfied but would consider a change.
 - _____ (c) Somewhat dissatisfied. Would change if you could.
 - _____ (d) Thoroughly dissatisfied.
- Check (✓) one of the above.

- (f) Has your High School training helped you in getting this job or in performing it satisfactorily? _____

In what ways? _____

20. Please give your opinion on each of the following questions:

- (a) How long should a school year be? Check (✓) one.
- ___(1) Less than 10 mths. (If so, how long? ___mths.)
 - ___(2) The present period of 10 months.
 - ___(3) More than 10 mths. (If so, how long? ___mths.)
- (b) What changes should be made in the kind of training and instruction given in our High Schools? Check (✓) one.
- ___(1) Make no changes.
 - ___(2) More diversified courses.
 - ___(3) More courses should be offered to help students plan their future. Courses such as _____
 - ___(4) More courses should be offered to prepare students for their everyday living as a member of a family and as a citizen. Courses such as _____
 - ___(5) Additional courses should be given in Agriculture or Home Economics.
 - ___(6) Additional courses to train some students for other fields such as retail sales, mechanics, skilled trades.
- (c) How many years should students be required to go to High School to receive a High School Diploma (now granted when 100 credits are attained). Check (✓) one.
- ___(1) Less than 100 credits. If so, how many credits? _____
 - ___(2) The present 100 credits.
 - ___(3) More than 100 credits. If, how many? _____
 - ___(4) Other suggestions. Please explain. _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- (d) What educational or age requirement should be set for minimum requirements before pupils may be permitted to quit school? Check (✓) one.
- ___(1) Completion of Gr. VIII.
 - ___(2) Completion of Gr. X.

- ☐ (3) Completion of Gr. XII.
- ☐ (4) Sixteen years of age.
- ☐ (5) Please state any other suggestion you may have. _____

21. If you were only now beginning High School and knew your strengths and weaknesses as you know them now, what would you do? Check (✓) one.

- ☐ (a) Enter the same High School you did.
- ☐ (b) Enter a different large school.
- ☐ (c) Take courses that would be useful to you in University or College.
- ☐ (d) Take mostly options such as Shop, Home Economics, Psychology, and Law.
- ☐ (e) Not go to High School at all.
- ☐ (f) Enter some other type of school. Explain _____

22. State in your own words what you feel are the values and shortcomings of the present Alberta program of studies. Please give your frank opinions since these will help strengthen the Alberta curriculum.

- (a) Strengths of the program (what is good about the present program) _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- (b) Weaknesses of the program (what is wrong with the present program) _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

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